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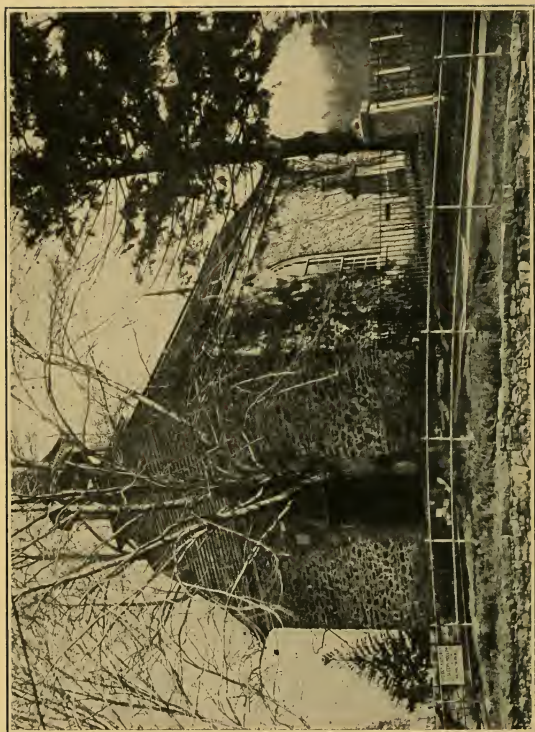


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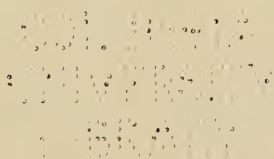






OLD DUTCH CHURCH AT SLEEPY HOLLOW

Historical Sketches  
OF THE  
ROMER, VAN TASSEL AND  
ALLIED FAMILIES  
AND  
TALES OF THE NEUTRAL  
GROUND



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JOHN LOCKWOOD ROMER.

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## PREFACE

The editor and compiler of this volume desires to express his acknowledgment and appreciation of the courtesy of the writers and publishers whose kind permission to reproduce the several articles credited to them respectively has made it possible for him to gather into one sheaf the fragmentary legends and traditions and bits of family history relating to the Romer and Van Tassel families of Westchester County, which have hitherto appeared in print.

Miss Sarah Comstock's article, so much of which as is of family interest, published herein under the title "A Visit to Elmsford," appeared originally in the *New York Times*, some of it being later incorporated in her "Old Roads from the Heart of New York," published by G. P. Putnam's Sons. Its appearance here is by consent of the author and publishers.

Mrs. B. H. Dean's sketch, "A Bit of the Neutral Ground," first appeared in the New York Central Lines' *Four Track News*, which has kindly permitted its reproduction.

"How One Hundred and Fifty Dollars Will Save Patriots' Graves" was first published in the *New York Evening Post*, September 16, 1911, and that journal consents to its publication here.

The *New York Tribune* likewise consents to the reproduction of an article entitled, "He Aided André's Captors," which appeared first in the *Tribune* of July 6, 1896.

So, also, the *Evening Mail* gives permission to republish the story "Where John André Was Captured," which was first published in the *Mail and Express*, October 12, 1895.

The *American Magazine*, having succeeded to *Frank Leslie's Monthly*, kindly permits the reproduction of "Heroes of the Neutral Ground," which originally appeared in the *Monthly* in July, 1897.

And the *Tarrytown Argus* also consents to the republication of an article entitled "The Romer Family," written by Reverend John B. Thompson, D.D., appearing originally in the *Argus*, March 9, 1907.

The "Minutes of the Executive Council of the Colony of New York," "Sketches of Long Island," "Early Long Island," "History of East Hampton" and the "Souvenir of Monument Dedication at Tarrytown" have likewise furnished interesting material and data for this compilation.

Many of the articles above mentioned were inspired by visits which their writers made to Colonel John C. L. Hamilton, of Elmsford, whose delight has been to rescue from oblivion and disseminate the traditional lore of the Sawmill River Valley, and whose kindly assistance in the preparation of this volume is likewise acknowledged.

It has seemed fitting to me that the historical items appearing in this volume should be confided to the safe-keeping of something more permanent and certain than the voice of tradition, and so this collection has been made and put into type in the hope of preserving for the present and future descendants of Jacob and Frena, of Jan Cornelius and Catoneras, of John and Leah, of William and Ruth, of Hector and Polly, of Luther and Minerva, these treasured stories of their ancestors.

The editor has not attempted to change or modernize the spelling or style of writing of the articles and records used in the following pages as the gradual changes and development of names and customs seem very interesting.

JOHN LOCKWOOD ROMER.

Buffalo, March, 1917.

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OLD BRIDGE AT SLEEPY HOLLOW

COPY OF PEN DRAWING  
BY  
KATHERINE TAYLOR ROMER



## THE ROMER FAMILY.

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By JOHN B. THOMPSON, D. D.

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At the end of the seventeenth and the beginning of the eighteenth century such leaders of religious thought in Europe as Spener, Francke, and others like them, advised their pious adherents to seek in America refuge from the persecutions which befell them in their native lands. Those who followed this advice wrote back such glowing accounts of life in the new world that multitudes followed them across the ocean. Land companies were formed to facilitate the movement. Agents received a bonus of four pounds for each emigrant secured by them. Captains of vessels brought out hundreds and thousands, who had no money, and, therefore, consented to be sold to service in the new world. From this service they were to redeem themselves by labor for a stipulated period, usually from three to five years. Such immigrants were known as "redemptioners." The furor of immigration from Switzerland was so great that the civil authorities in successive years issued more than a dozen proclamations warning people of the risks they thus incurred—but all in vain. People came in companies, or singly, with little or no thought for the morrow. Their motives were as various as their characters, but all expected to be able to make themselves more comfortable than they had been in the land of their birth. The usual route of travel from Switzerland was down the Rhine to its mouth in the



Netherlands where passage was taken for the British colonies in America. Among these immigrants from one of the German-speaking cantons of Switzerland was a man named Jacob Romer, though the Dutch of New York (which had been an English colony for many years) wrote the name variously as Roemer, Romer, Romen, Rome, Roome and Roomer! The name was (and still is) well known in Europe.

Three-quarters of a century before, the Danish astronomer, Ole Roemer, had given to the world the knowledge of the velocity of light and the distance of the earth from the sun. John James Roemer was the famous Professor of botany after whom Linnæus named the genus of beautiful plants still called "Romeria." He, too, was a German-Swiss, and was a contemporary of Jacob Roemer, though they never met. The Italian name "Romeo," designates, primarily, a man who has seen Rome; and in the more northern languages the name "Roemer" had the same signification. In all the Christian ages pilgrimages to Jerusalem have been in vogue; but during the middle ages pilgrimages to Rome were even more common. Skeat's Anglo Saxon Dictionary informs us that these pilgrimages were so popular even in England that it came to be generally believed that this was the origin of the English verb "to roam"! In those days "*Ich bin ein roemer*" was almost as proud a boast in religious and social circles as it had been in the courts of kings when Paul made a similar boast for himself. For these reasons Roemer became a family name; and the great number of these pilgrimages in those days accounts for the prevalence of the name throughout Europe. One of Jacob Roemer's ancestors had undoubtedly been on pilgrimage to Rome.

Jacob Roemer's widow told Mrs. Eliza Ann See of Tarrytown that before he became her lover he had learned the tailor's trade, and that her parents objected to their marriage because of his inferiority in wealth and position. They



must have forgotten their own origin, for their family name was "Haarlager," which can hardly mean anything else than "hairstresser." But they proved inexorable, and Jacob's thoughts turned, not unnaturally, to the paradise in America whither so many of his friends had already gone. There were several of the same name already in New York.

His sweetheart's name was "Frena," a name derived (whether she knew it or not) from the ancient goddess who, her ancestors believed, produced the bright flowers of Spring and loved her husband so dearly that when separated from him she wept continually and her tear drops, as they fell to the earth, became flakes of gold, so that these when they were found were known as "Freya's tears."

Frena Haarlager proved herself as the goddess of her forefathers. She would not be separated from the man of her choice. Together they fled from home to seek their fortune in the western world. By the time they reached the coast their little store of money was exhausted; but they secured their passage to New York by agreeing to allow themselves to be sold on arrival as "redemptioners." Coming from so small a country, they had no conception of the immense distances in America. Ignorant of both the Dutch and English languages, almost before they knew it they were sold to different masters and hurried away to their respective destinations, neither of them knowing whither the other had gone.

Jacob bore the name of the patriarch who, in a strange land, had served seven years for Rachel, \* \* \* and they seemed to him but a few days for the love that he had for her. \* \* \* And Jacob Roemer bore patiently his shorter period of service until he could again be free to seek his Frena from whom he had been so unexpectedly separated. He had faith in her and in the God of his fathers and, true to his early training, when he had learned to understand the language of the people about him, connected himself with the Reformed Church in New York.

When his time was out he began to inquire for Frena. His master understood that she had been sold to a man somewhere "up the river" toward Albany and with only this clew he began his search. He made his way up the river as far as Philipsburgh.

In this place was living at that time a man named Hendrick Roemer. He had been married here as early as October 15, 1743, to Marretje Gardenier, a young woman from the manor of Mr. Van Cortlandt. After her death he had married a German-speaking woman from Philadelphia, named Catrina Kortseborne. His children were baptized here. Their names were:

Deliefferins (Deliverance), baptized November 10, 1744.

Marretje, baptized April 19, 1746.

Frena, baptized August 24, 1748. (She married, May 6, 1770, Jan Hemmen).

Hendrick, baptized April 13, 1751.

Jacob, baptized April 21, 1756.

At this last baptism the witnesses were Jacob and Frena Roemer, who were then living at Philipsburgh.

But I anticipate! Hendrick Roemer was also a native of Switzerland, and may have been an elder brother or other relative of Jacob; but on this point we have no evidence. Whatever may have been the reason, Jacob decided to make his home at Philipsburgh while prosecuting his search for Frena. He took up his old trade. But he was lonely. He missed the mountains of his native land. He climbed the highest hill in the vicinity, known then, as now, Kykuit, the "lookout mountain" of the region. There he secured a little plot of ground and built himself a hut. The precise spot was just beyond the summit, on the easterly slope, where bubbled up the spring from which issued the rivulet that kept green the grass on both its sides for more than a hundred years later. The description given by Mrs. See enables me to recognize the location without difficulty.

Jacob's piety was as steadfast as his industry and his affection. He brought from New York his certificate of church membership and was received into the communion of the church at Philipsburgh, June 17, 1753. At that time the post-rider between New York and Albany was Anthony Post, the youngest son of Jan Jansen Postmael. He was now 66 years of age; but the journey was performed leisurely. It occupied full two weeks, the rider going up on one side of the river and coming down on the other.

To him Jacob appealed for help, showing the seven dollars which he had saved, and agreeing to give him this if he would find Frena and bring her safe to Philipsburgh. Antony accordingly went on his way, inquiring at every place at which he stopped to change the mail for "one Frena," as she had been described to him. Once and again and yet again he went and came and brought no tidings. At last, however, he reported that he had seen a man who thought he recognized the description as that of a woman residing west of the King's Road a few miles from Albany. To her the stranger would make his report and, if she were willing, bring her to Albany to meet Antony upon his next arrival there. There Antony found her, and she rode behind him on his sturdy steed the whole hundred miles and more from Albany to Philipsburgh.

"All's well that ends well," and Jacob Roemer and Frena Haarlager were married at Philipsburgh, August 20, 1754. She told Mrs. See how happily they lived together, though at first the only furniture in their little house in the woods was a chest which contained all of their crockery and cooking utensils, served as the table from which they ate their frugal meals, and between meals also as a tailor's bench.

In those days the church at Philipsburgh had no regular pastor. It was visited three or four times a year by ministers from New York who preached the Gospel, administered the sacraments, and examined applicants for admission to church privileges. Thus it came to pass that Frena

Haarlager, wife of Jacob Roemer, was not received into the church of Philipsburgh until nearly a year after her marriage, June 18, 1755, the day after the baptism of her first baby. The witnesses at the baptism were Hendrick Roemer and his wife, Maretje Gardenier, of whom I have already spoken.

Jacob and Frena had ten—and probably twelve—children.

1. The first was Hendrick, baptized June 17, 1755. He grew up and married, February 26, 1777, Christina, daughter of Ary Van Wormer and his wife, Annatje Van Tassel, whose ancestors had come from the island at the mouth of the Rhine, known as "the Tessel" or "Texel."

2. The second child of Jacob and Frena Romer was Elizabeth, baptized March 3, 1757.

3. The third was Frena, baptized September 13, 1760. In the year 1784, she married Abraham Martelings.

4. The fourth child, Catrina, was baptized April 30, 1763.

5. The fifth was named after his father, Jacob. He was baptized November 4, 1764. In due season he married a woman named Annatje, and their daughter Catrina (who was born July 8, 1791) was baptized December 4 in that year.

6. The sixth child of Jacob and Frena was Johannes, baptized near the end of December, 1767. In Bolton's History of Westchester County, he is called "Captain John of Greenburgh." He married Leah, daughter of Cornelius Van Tassel and his wife Elizabeth Storms.

7. The seventh child, Mareitje, was baptized September 2, 1769.

8. The eighth, Annatje, was baptized May 9, 1772.

9. The ninth, Sarah, was baptized November 16, 1773.

10. The tenth was Femmetje, born February 20, 1777, and baptized on the 17th day of the ensuing August.

From this time until the end of the Revolutionary War, no church records were kept. Or, if they were, they perished because of the tumultuous proceedings of those days. Bolton is therefore probably right in giving us the names of two other children of Jacob and Frena Romer. He mentions:

11. Joseph.

12. James.\*

The parents of this patriarchal family lived to a good old age. Jacob was the feeble, and died first. It must have been at least as late as 1815 when Frena, in her lonely age, poured into the ear of her sympathizing young friend the story of her eventful life. It was such a story of true love as hardly could have been appreciated by her friend at an earlier period of her life. She still appreciated it when she told it to me half a century later; and I am sure I should not have heard it had I not felt similar sympathy with the lovers whose example of affection and faithfulness I am glad to put on record for the admiration and imitation of lovers in succeeding generations.

Frena told Mrs. See how, one day in his old age, Jacob said to a neighbor, in the broken English which was then beginning to supplant the native Dutch of the region, "I prays mine Gott I never knows a sick bett;" and that very evening as she drew near according to her custom to help him to his couch, he gazed into her eyes with the old look of love, essayed to speak, stretched out his hands to her, and—was gone!

I believe there are gravestones still standing near the old church to indicate the burial places of some of the children of Jacob and Frena Romer. It would not be difficult to

trace their descendants to the present day, and those of them now living would doubtless be glad to cherish the memory and imitate the virtues of such worthy ancestors.—*The Tarrytown Argus*, March 9, 1907.

\*Dr. Thompson has set forth the names of Jacob and Frena Romer's children in the order of their baptism. Col. J. C. L. Hamilton who has made an exhaustive study of the subject, writes that James and Joseph were probably born between 1764 and 1767; there is no record of their baptism. James was older than John. When the captors of André returned to the home of Jacob Romer, John being the youngest, was sent to fetch the pewter basin, forgotten by the others.

## CAPTAIN JACOB ROMER.

---

The romantic story of the love which Jacob Romer and Frena Haarlager bore each other, and of the dangers and trials which they underwent and endured for each other's sake, has been well told by Reverend John B. Thompson, D. D., in his sketch appearing on preceding pages, entitled, "The Romer Family."

In those early days, when, for the love which warmed their hearts, Jacob and Frena forsook home and kindred, braved the dangers of a comparatively unknown sea, and, without purse or scrip, faced the privations and trials of a new and untamed land, it was a common thing for persons so circumstanced to consent that they be sold into servitude by the captain of the ship which brought them over, for a term sufficient to compensate him for the expense of the passage. Persons who had some money to pay on account, and were sold for the balance, were called "redemptioners," they having the right to redeem themselves from service at any time by paying the remainder due for their passage; but such as were sold for the entire passage money were called "servants," and were compelled to serve the entire period for which they were sold.

In the case of Jacob and Frena, she was sold for the passage expense of both, for a term of seven years—three and one-half years for each—in order that he might the better prepare for their future. One account is to the effect that Frena had money for her passage but that she insisted on using it for the payment of Jacob's passage, so



that he might be free to work for their mutual benefit; but it seems incredible that labor was at that time so cheap that it required seven years' service to pay the passage for one—it seems more probable that her service for seven years was for the payment of the expenses of both.

They came to this country in or about the year 1747. Frena was sold "up the river" near Albany, and Jacob busied himself at first in New Amsterdam. That he was a man of character and respectability is evidenced by the fact that he united with the Dutch Church, in New Amsterdam, from which, after he had removed to Phillips Manor, he obtained a certificate and united with the Dutch Church at Sleepy Hollow, in 1753.

There are some traditions to the effect that he enlisted on an English man-of-war on blockade duty, off the port of New York, and, a Spanish ship having been captured, he was put in command of a prize crew and brought the prize into port. In a volume entitled "Old Westchester Wills," there is mentioned the will of one Richard Blizzard, of Eastchester, in Westchester County, dated December 8, 1757, wherein he bequeathed to his friend Thomas Butler "all the prize money due to me on the Royal Hester, Snow of War, Jacob Romer, Commander"; but whether or not Jacob sailed the seas for a time as privateersman or otherwise, it is certain as the seven years of Frena's service were about expiring, he made preparations for her reception. He bought from Colonel Adolph Phillips a small piece of land on a high hill called "Kykuit," now known as "East View," near Tarrytown, and erected a little house, close by a bubbling spring of water, the situation commanding an extensive view of the surrounding country. The land he purchased was at the extreme easterly end of a farm occupied by one Michael McKeel, who was a tenant of Colonel Phillips. After the Revolution, when the Phillips land was sold by the Commissioners of Forfeiture, this farm was purchased by McKeel, but in the deed given him



by the Commissioners they excepted from its provisions the parcel occupied by Captain Jacob Romer, this tract being the only parcel of the entire manor which was so excepted, showing that Jacob Romer's title to his little homestead was acknowledged and respected.

Jacob, having bought his land, built his house, and joined the church, set about finding his Frena, her seven years of service being about ended. He applied to the old *post reiter* who carried the mail between New York and Albany, to assist him, and showed him some money with which he could compensate him for his trouble. The old man's search was successful, and one day Frena mounted his horse behind him and made the journey, one hundred and fifty miles, in this manner. The meeting of Jacob and Frena was a joyful one, as may well be imagined. The long years of waiting were ended. Jacob had some relatives, Hendrick Roemer and family, living near, and of course there was a sincere welcome. They engaged the Minister, Reverend Johannes Ritzema, and on August 20, 1754, in the old Dutch church in Sleepy Hollow, were married. The record states that both were born in Switzerland, and at the time of marriage were living in Phillipsburg.

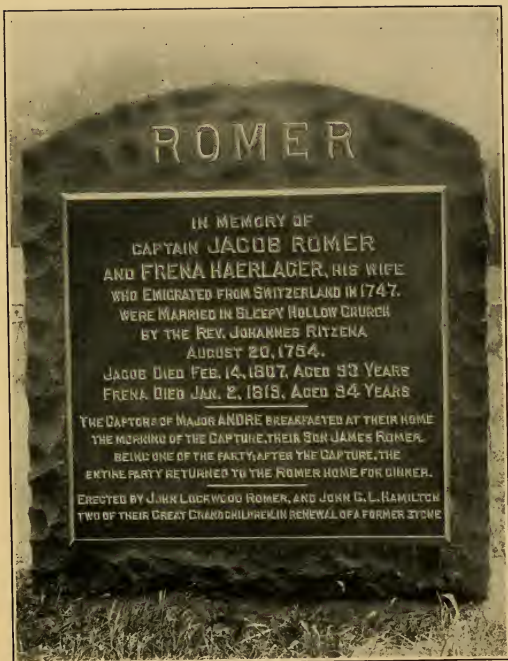
Then a fire was kindled in the little house on the hill Kykuit, and a new home was organized. Very humble it was, but it sheltered loving hearts, and reverent souls. In Eden the Lord said to Adam that he should eat bread in the sweat of his face, all the days of his life. And this is what Jacob and Frena did, as the result of honest toil. On Ararat, Noah was told to multiply and replenish the earth. Jacob and Frena followed this injunction, and sent out from their hill-side home five stalwart sons and seven womanly daughters. The sons were named Hendrick, Jacob, James, Joseph and John; the daughters Elizabeth, Frena, Catrina, Marietje, Annateje, Sarah and Fremmetje. Ten of these—all but James and Joseph—according to the record, were baptized in the old church at Sleepy Hollow. Frena

united with this church on June 18, 1755,—the day after the baptism of Hendrick, her first baby.

The sons of this couple all shouldered muskets for home and country in the Revolutionary War. The daughters married and helped organize other homes, and gave other sons for the taming of the wilderness and the upbuilding of the State.

The little house on the hillside continued to be the home of Jacob and Frena until long after the Revolution. It was situated about 600 feet south of the highway, leading from Tarrytown to White Plains, sometimes called the "Refugee's Path," with which it was connected by a private lane. Located in the very heart of the neutral ground, it undoubtedly owed its security in those troublous days to its isolation. It was to this house that James Romer led the little band of militiamen before day-break, on the memorable 23rd of September, 1780, who, before the noon hour of that day, captured Major John André. It was here that Frena, mother of James, prepared and served breakfast for the party and put up a lunch in the old pewter basin for their mid-day meal, and it was to this house that the captors returned, bringing their prisoner with them, and had dinner. Frena, missing her pewter basin, which had been overlooked and forgotten in the excitement of the capture, sent her youngest son, John, to fetch it, which he did, and John's grandson, Colonel John C. L. Hamilton, of Elmsford, now (1916) has it.

Dinner being prepared, Mrs. Romer asked André to partake, but he declined. Noticing his superior apparel and demeanor, she apologized for the plain repast, but André said: "Madam, it is all very good, but indeed I cannot eat." After their meal, the captors, seven in number, together with their prisoner and accompanied by John Romer, brother of James, proceeded to the American Headquarters and there delivered the British Major to Colonel Jameson, in command of the post.



SLEEPY HOLLOW CHURCHYARD



After the war, John Romer married Leah, the daughter of Lieutenant Cornelius Van Tassel. John and Cornelius joined hands in 1793, built the well-known stone and frame house on the Sawmill River Road, on the site of the former home of Lieutenant Van Tassel, burned by the British and Tories in 1777. Upon the completion of this new home, Captain Jacob Romer and his wife Frena, in their old age, left their home on Kykuit, and went into the valley of the Sawmill River, then as now a valley of peace and comfort, and made their home with their son John for the remainder of their days. In 1806, Jacob conveyed to John his homestead on Kykuit by deed, appearing at the end of this sketch. The old house remained in its original location until the construction of the New York and Putnam Railroad, when it was removed into an adjoining field, and a few years later, was accidentally destroyed by fire.

The land originally purchased by Jacob Romer from Colonel Phillips is now owned by Mr. John D. Rockefeller.

Jacob Romer died February 14, 1807, aged ninety-three years; Frena died January 2, 1819, aged ninety-four years. They are both buried in the churchyard surrounding the old Dutch church at Sleepy Hollow, in which church they exchanged their marriage vows and where they brought their children for baptism. Very humble people were they—children of privation and toil, living in troublesome times, yet possessing qualities which would enrich any of earth's nobility. They were true to their love; they married for better or worse, and did not forget their marriage vows; they walked uprightly in the paths of their life; they fought a good fight; they finished their course; they kept the faith.

The stone erected over their graves a century ago has crumbled, but two of their descendants have erected another of enduring granite to mark the resting place of these common people who played well their part.

## JACOB ROMER TO JOHN ROMER

DEED.

THIS INDENTURE, Made this Fifth day of November, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and six, Between Jacob Roomer, of the Town of Greenburgh, in the County of Westchester and State of New York, of the first part, and John Romer, of the same place, of the second part, WITNESSETH, That the said Jacob Roomer for and in consideration of the Natural Love and affection which he the said Jacob Roomer hath and beareth unto the said John Roomer, and also for the better support and livelihood of him the said John Roomer, hath Given and Granted, Alienated, enfeoffed and confirmed, and by these presents doth give, grant, alien, enfeoff and confirm unto the said John Roomer, his heirs and assigns, All that certain tract piece or parcel of land and premises now or late in the possession and occupation of the said Jacob Romer, situate, lying and being in the said Town of Greenburgh, and computed to be about Four Acres, be the same more or less, as the same was heretofore possessed by the said Jacob Roomer; TOGETHER with all and singular the Heriditaments and appurtenances thereunto belonging or in any wise appertaining to the said tract, piece or parcel of Land hereby Granted or meant or intended to be unto the said John Roomer as aforesaid, and every part and parcel thereof or which hath been heretofore held and occupied or enjoyed or accepted, reputed, taken or known as a part or parcel thereof, or in any manner belonging to the same. And all the estate, right, title, interest, property, claim and demand whatsoever of him the said Jacob Roomer, of, in or to the same lot, tract, piece or parcel of land and premises, and of in and to every part and parcel thereof, with their and every of their appurtenances.

To Have and To Hold the said tract, piece or parcel of land and all and singular other the premises hereby granted and confirmed or mentioned or intended so to be with all and singular the appurtenances unto the same belonging or in any wise appertaining unto the said John Roomer, his heirs and assigns, to the only proper use, benefit and behoof of him the said John Roomer, his heirs and assigns forever.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, The said Jacob Roomer hath hereunto set his hand and affixed his seal the day and year first above written.

His  
JACOB X ROMER.  
Mark

The Words "Natural Love" in the third line written on an erasure before the execution hereof.

Sealed and Delivered in Presence of

.....

Solomon Brewer  
Thomas Boyce, Junior  
Abraham Acker  
Henry Hammond

Westchester County, SS.

Be it remembered that on the third day of April in the year One thousand eight hundred and seven, before me, Caleb Tompkins, one of the Judges of the Court of Common Pleas in and for said County, personally appeared Henry Hammond, to me known to be the same person described as one of the subscribing witnesses to the within conveyance, who being duly sworn deposeth and said that he saw Jacob Romer, to him known to be the same person described in and who executed the said deed, execute the same for the use and purposes therein mentioned, and that this deponent together with Solomon Brewer, Thomas Boyce, Junior, and Abraham Acker subscribed the same as witnesses. I having inspected the said conveyance and finding no material erasures or interlineations thereon, excepting such as are noted, do allow the same to be recorded.

CALEB TOMPKINS.

## CAPTAIN JOHN ROMER.

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John Romer, the fifth son of Captain Jacob Romer and Frena Haarlager, his wife, was born in the home of his parents on the "Lookout Mountain," known as Kykuit, overlooking the Sawmill River Valley, the location being now known as East View, near Tarrytown, on the tenth day of November, 1764, and was baptized in December, 1767, in the old Dutch church in Sleepy Hollow.

The family of Captain Jacob Romer consisted of himself, wife, five sons and seven daughters. The sons were named Hendrick, Jacob, James, Joseph and John, all of whom were enrolled as members of Colonial regiments serving in the cause of American liberty in the Revolutionary War. John Romer, the subject of this sketch, being less than twelve years of age on the breaking out of the war, was later enrolled as a private in Captain Van Benshoten's Company of the Second Regiment of Dutchess County Militia. The daughters of Jacob and Frena were: Elizabeth, baptized March 3, 1757; Frena, baptized September 13, 1760 (she married Abraham Martelings in 1784); Catrina, baptized April 30, 1763; Mareitje, baptized September 2, 1769; Annatje, baptized May 9, 1772; Sarah, baptized November 16, 1773; Femmetje, born February 20, 1777; baptized August 17, 1777.

The home of this patriarchal and patriotic family was located in the very heart of what was known as the "Neutral Ground," a territory lying north of the lines of the British army, whose headquarters were in New York City, and





CAPTAIN JOHN ROMER



south of the lines of the Continental army, which occupied the territory north of the Croton River. The inhabitants of this section were divided in their political sentiments,—some, called Tories, holding allegiance to the British Crown; and others, imbued with the spirit of independence, espousing the cause of the Colonies, were designated by the Tories as rebels. Because of their position outside the lines of both armies, the inhabitants of this locality were deprived of the protection which the occupancy of the territory by either army would have afforded, and so they were subjected to ill usage by the irresponsible followers of both camps, by the Tory partisans particularly, and at times by direct command of British officers. The well-stocked farms of the thrifty dwellers in the Sawmill River Valley afforded, while anything remained, a rich foraging ground for the British forces quartered in New York, and their Tory sympathizers in the neighborhood were not slow in organizing bands of marauders to plunder the farms, dwellings, barns and hen roosts of their "Rebel" neighbors, finding for the loot so obtained a ready market within the British lines. This sort of brigandage soon reduced the people of the Valley to necessitous circumstances. In order to recoup their losses, some of the more lawless of the inhabitants formed themselves into bands, called "Skinners," to prey upon their neighbors of Tory proclivities, but both sets of brigands soon lost sight of the political affiliations of the people, and seeking only their personal benefit, did not stop to inquire whether a sleek ox, or a fat hog, belonged either to a Rebel or a Tory—a toothsome sparerib or a juicy steak or roast and a lusty appetite for either obscured every other consideration and was to them a sufficient justification for ruthless robbery. It is no wonder that the dwellers on this Neutral Ground established lookout stations whence an alarm was sounded whenever a party of horse or foot was observed approaching, on hearing which the cattle were driven into the woods for concealment, household valuables

secreted, families retired to places of hiding, and an occasional musket ball was sent through the breast of a cowboy by some incensed farmer from his place of ambush. The region was also the scene of frequent sanguinary encounters between the enrolled troops of the contending armies. Bolton, in his *History of Westchester County*, recounts some of these. The story of one of them, being an encounter in the Sawmill River Valley between a troop of American cavalry commanded by Captain Hopkins and a British force under Colonel Emerick, was related to him by John Romer, the subject of this sketch, who was an eyewitness of and probably a participant in the engagement.

Irving, in his *Life of Washington*, relates the story of the attack made by the British and Hessians on American troops, posted at Young's House, near White Plains, on February 2, 1780, which is here reproduced :

"Another noted maraud during Knyphausen's military sway was in the lower part of Westchester County, in a hilly region lying between the British and American lines, which had been the scene of part of the past year's campaign. Being often foraged, its inhabitants had become belligerent in their habits, and quick to retaliate on all marauders.

"In this region, about twenty miles from the British outposts, and not far from White Plains, the Americans had established a post of three hundred men at a stone building commonly known as Young's House, from the name of its owner. It commanded a road which passed from north to south down along the narrow but fertile valley of the Sawmill River, now known by its original Indian name of the Neperan. On this road the garrison of Young's House kept a vigilant eye, to intercept the convoys of cattle and provision which had been collected or plundered by the enemy, and which passed down this valley toward New York. This post had long been an annoyance to the enemy, but its distance from the British lines had hitherto saved it from attack. The country was now covered with snow; troops could be rapidly transported on sleighs; and it was determined that Young's House should be surprised and this rebel nest broken up.

"On the evening of the second of February, 1780, an expedition set out for the purpose from King's Bridge, led by Lieutenant-Colonel Norton, and consisting of four flank companies of guards, two companies of Hessians, and a party of Yagers, all in sleighs; besides a body of Yager cavalry, and a number of mounted Westchester refugees, with two three-pounders.

"The snow, being newly fallen, was deep; the sleighs broke their way through it with difficulty. The troops at length abandoned them and pushed forward on foot. The cannon were left behind for the same reason. It was a weary tramp; the snow in many places was more than two feet deep and they had to take by-ways and cross-roads to avoid the American patrols.

"The sun rose while they were yet seven miles from Young's House. To surprise the post was out of the question; still they kept on. Before they could reach the house the country had taken the alarm, and the Westchester yeomanry had armed themselves, and were hastening to aid the garrison.

"The British light infantry and grenadiers invested the mansion; the cavalry posted themselves on a neighboring eminence, to prevent retreat or reinforcement, and the house was assailed. It made a brave resistance, and was aided by some of the yeomanry stationed in an adjacent orchard. The garrison, however, was overpowered; numbers were killed, and ninety taken prisoners. The house was sacked and set in flames; and thus, having broken up this stronghold of the country, the party hastened to effect a safe return to the lines with their prisoners, some of whom were so badly wounded that they had to be left at different farm-houses on the road. The detachment reached King's Bridge by nine o'clock the same evening, and boasted that, in this surprise, they had sustained no other losses than two killed and twenty-three wounded.

"Of the prisoners many were doubtless farmers and farmers' sons, who had turned out in defense of their homes, and were now to be transferred to the horrors of the jail and sugar-house in New York. We give this affair as a specimen of the *petite guerre* carried on in the southern part of Westchester County; the NEUTRAL GROUND, as it was called, but subjected, from its vicinity to the city, to be foraged by the royal forces and plundered and insulted by refugees and Tories. No part of the Union was more harried and trampled down by friend and foe, during the Revolution, than this debatable region and the Jerseys."

Nearly the entire male patriotic population of this district able to do military duty were enrolled in the militia regiments of the country, men of the first regiment being stationed at various posts in the county for the protection of the residents and for patrol duty in advance of the American lines. This regiment was not constantly in the field, but was ordered out from time to time as the exigencies of the service demanded. In December, 1776, a detachment from this regiment was stationed at the houses of Lieutenant Cornelius Van Tassel and Committeeman Peter Van Tassel, on the Sawmill River Road, and another at the

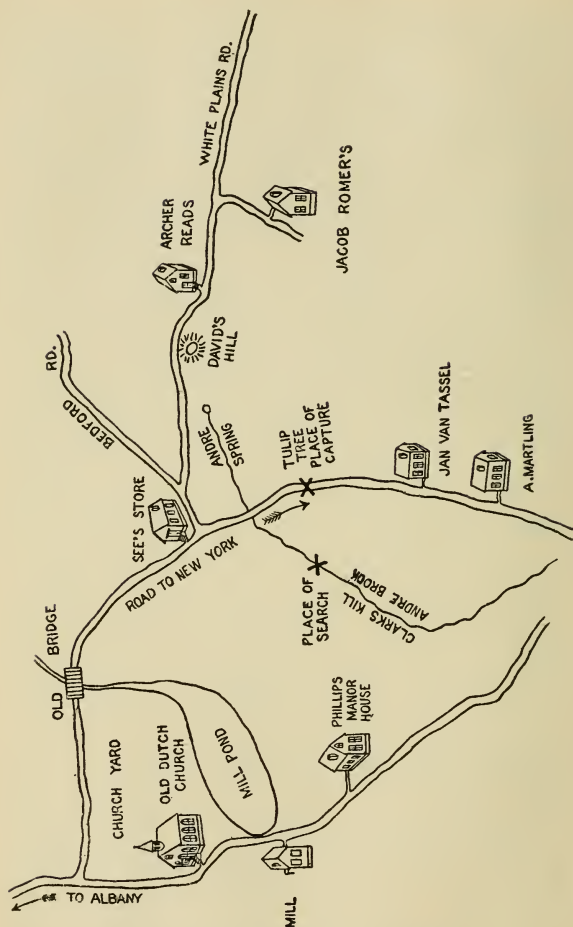
house of Joseph Young. Subsequently Captain Sybert Acker's company of about sixty men was stationed at the Van Tassel houses. The men so enrolled, when not actually needed for camp or active field service, were allowed to return temporarily to their homes to plant and cultivate their farms and otherwise provide for their families. Their terms of enlistment were usually for short periods; their pay was uncertain, and when made was in paper currency of little value. Money was so scarce that the Colony of New York at one time offered ten bushels of wheat as pay for three months' service of enlisted men, and for a longer period one and one-half bushels per month, and directed the county officials of Westchester County to levy a tax upon certain townships of the county where the civil law could be enforced, to wit, the towns of Poundridge, Salem, North Castle, Bedford and Manor of Cortland, requiring them to furnish an aggregate of one hundred and twenty-five pairs of good woolen stockings and one hundred and four pairs of strong leather shoes for use of the army, the Colony at large being required to furnish a total of two thousand pairs of shoes, and twenty-four hundred pairs of stockings.

In addition to general privations, the frequent outrages and robberies perpetrated by Tories, Refugees, Hessians, Yagers, British and Skinners had so aroused and enraged the sturdy farmers of the neighborhood that small independent parties were frequently organized for temporary service in intercepting and dispersing marauding bands setting forth on these nefarious excursions, or who might be returning with their loot to the British lines, and if in the course of their encounters some of the cattle thieves were killed there was no mourning on the part of the Westchester yeomen.

In 1780, the Legislature of New York, in order to prevent the British obtaining supplies of horses and cattle from the upper part of the counties of Westchester, Dutchess and Orange, passed an Act requiring Governor Clinton to es-

tablish by proclamation a line through those counties south of which no cattle or horses should be driven except for the use of the American army, under penalty of forfeiture and sale, the proceeds thereof to be divided between the State and the parties making the capture. This line was established at Pines Bridge, over the Croton River. The troops at Lieutenant Joseph Young's house, on the lower cross-road leading from Tarrytown to White Plains, were removed to Pines Bridge, and five companies of the South Battalion of Westchester County Militia returned to their homes in the immediate neighborhood.

In the latter part of September, 1780, a little company of seven young men, named John Paulding, David Williams, Isaac See, James Romer, John Yerks, Isaac Van Wart and Abraham Williams, all members of the local militia, learning of the terms of the Governor's proclamation, arranged to do a little scout duty for the general good on their own account. They were then in the neighborhood of North Salem. On the twenty-second of September, having obtained permission to take their muskets with them, they took up their march toward Tarrytown; that night they spent in the barn of John Anderson, sleeping on the hay; the next morning they were astir before daybreak, and James Romer piloted them over Buttermilk Hill to the house of his father, Captain Jacob Romer, on Kykuit. Here they had a substantial breakfast, and Mrs. Romer (Frena) prepared a lunch for them, packing the same in a large pewter basin and a basket for convenience of carriage. Thus provided, and carrying their muskets, the little party proceeded to the road crossing the country to White Plains (commonly called the Refugees' Path) and along that road towards the Bedford Road (stopping at Archer Read's for a pack of cards), until they reached an elevation known as David's Hill. From here an extensive view of the Hudson, the old manor house and church, as well as the intersection of the roads leading to Bedford, Sleepy Hollow, and White Plains Road, as also



MAP OF LOCALITY OF ANDRÉ'S CAPTURE



the main Albany Post Road leading toward New York, could be had, and here James Romer, Isaac See, John Yerks and Abraham Williams were stationed to watch and guard this road, while John Paulding, Isaac Van Wart and David Williams proceeded across the fields to the "lower" road, known as the Old Post Road, leading more directly to New York, and only a few hundred yards distant in the valley below. Here, at a point where the road was narrow because of a large tulip (whitewood) tree, standing in the center of it, the three halted and stationed themselves, being about six hundred feet southerly from David's Hill, where the four were stationed. This tulip tree was a noted landmark, the trunk being twenty-four feet in circumference and one hundred and eleven feet high, and its branches spreading out to a diameter of one hundred and six feet. In the shade of this tree, Major André, the British spy, was arrested. The suspicions of the three Americans being aroused, André was taken into an adjoining field, beside a little brook, then known as Clark's Kill, afterwards called André's Brook, where, screened by the bushes, he was searched and the incriminating papers found in his stockings. The three captors, with their prisoner, then joined the other members of the party on the hill, and, refusing all of André's offers of money for his release, they concluded to take him to the American headquarters. Leaving their post on the hill, they proceeded once more to the house of Jacob Romer, on Kykuit, where they stopped for their dinner. In the excitement of the capture and in their eagerness to avoid the highway, the three men on the lower road, who had carried the lunch, forgot all about it, and left lunch and basin under the tulip tree. Pewter basins were pewter basins in those days, and when Mrs. Jacob Romer observed its absence, learning where it had been left, her youngest son, John Romer, then sixteen years of age, was sent for it, and brought it back to his home. He retained it until near the close of his life, when he gave it to his grandson, John C. L. Hamilton, who at

this date (1916) still has it. When the noon repast was ready, Mrs. Romer urged André to partake, but he declined. Noticing his superior dress and demeanor, she thought he did not care for the plain food provided for the meal, and made apologies for it, when André interrupted, saying, "Madam, it is all very good, but indeed I cannot eat."

Finishing their meal, the seven captors, together with John Romer, set out for Colonel Jameson's headquarters, at a place called Mile Square, and there delivered their prisoner, who claimed at first to be John Anderson, but who later admitted his identity and acknowledged he was Major André, Adjutant-General of the British Army.

The old Albany Post Road was laid out by commissioners appointed for the purpose in September, 1723. The old road was changed about 1800 by an Act of the Legislature to its present location, and called Highland Turnpike. The right of way of the old road being found necessary for the construction of the Croton Aqueduct, it was officially closed by legislative enactment about the year 1838.

In the early summer of 1781, General Washington and the Count de Rochambeau having held a conference in respect to the campaign by the combined armies, the French marched from Connecticut and joined the American forces in the neighborhood of Dobbs Ferry, in Westchester County, having in view an attack upon the northern part of New York City. Washington, in pursuance of this plan, marched from Peekskill on the second of July, 1781, leaving his tents standing, making a direct halt at Croton Bridge, about nine miles from Peekskill, another at the Sleepy Hollow Church at Tarrytown, where he halted until dusk—"I made a halt at the church by Tarrytown till dusk"—Washington's Diary, July 2, 1781), and completed the rest of his march in the night to Valentine's Hill, four miles above King's Bridge, where he arrived about sunrise; but it was found that a British regiment was encamped on the north

end of New York Island, and a ship of war anchored in the river, so the surprisal of the British forts was out of the question. Being disappointed in his object, Washington did not care to fatigue his troops any more, but suffered them to remain on their arms, and spent a good part of the day reconnoitering the enemy's works. The next day he marched to Dobbs Ferry, where he was joined by the Count de Rochambeau on the sixth of July. The two armies now encamped; the American in two lines, resting on the Hudson at Dobbs Ferry, where it was covered by batteries, and extending eastward toward the Neperan, or Sawmill River; the French in a single line on the hills farther east, reaching to the Bronx River. The beautiful valley of the Neperan intervened between the encampments. It was a lovely country for a summer encampment—breezy hills commanding wide prospects, pleasant valleys watered by bright pastoral streams, the Bronx, Spraine and the Neperan, and abounding with never-failing springs. The French encampment made a gallant display along the Greenburg hills, giving much of cheer and encouragement to the American troops and to the long-suffering inhabitants of the region. The presence of the two armies gave the latter a sense of security they had not known since the breaking out of the war five years before, and inspired them with a hope that their tribulations were nearing an end. The commanders of the two armies occupied farmhouses in the neighborhood for their headquarters, Washington being lodged in the house of Lieutenant Joseph Appleby, and Rochambeau in the house of the widow of Gilbert Bates, which is still (1916) in existence. During the three or four weeks the two armies were so encamped the intercourse between the officers and men of the separate camps was very cordial, and occasionally, on festive occasions, long tables were spread in the adjacent barns which were converted into banqueting halls. The young French officers gained the good graces of the country belles, though little acquainted with their language.

Their encampment was particularly gay, and it was the boast of an old lady of the neighborhood many years after the war, that she had danced at headquarters when a girl with the celebrated Marshal Berthier, at that time one of the aides of the Count de Rochambeau.

During this period of encampment, Washington formed the plan of marching to Virginia with something more than two thousand of the American army and a part of the French force, in an attempt to capture Lord Cornwallis and his forces at Yorktown. Perfect secrecy was maintained as to this change of plan. Preparations were still carried on as if for an attack upon New York. An extensive encampment was marked out in the Jerseys and ovens erected there, and also in the southern part of Westchester County, and fuel provided for the baking of bread, as if a part of the besieging force were to be stationed there.

Several years afterwards Washington in a letter to Noah Webster writes :

"That much trouble was taken and finesse used to misguide and bewilder Sir Henry Clinton in regard to the real object by fictitious communications, as well as by making deceptive provision of ovens, forage and boats in his neighborhood is certain. Nor were less pains taken to deceive our own army, for I had always conceived, where the imposition does not completely take place at home, it would never sufficiently succeed abroad."

The youth and young manhood of John Romer were lived in stirring times. Scarcely a day passed during the period covered by the Revolutionary War but witnessed a tragedy of guerilla warfare in the region surrounding his home. His neighbors were despoiled of their property; some were killed; some were taken prisoners; the burning homes of others illumined the darkness of night. It is probable that only its isolated position on Kykuit saved his father's home from destruction, for the fact that it had sent forth five sturdy sons as members of the Colonial army would scarcely appeal to the Tories or British as a reason why it should be spared. Down in the valley of the Sawmill River, the





ROMER-VAN TASSEL HOMESTEAD ERECTED ON SITE OF LIEUTENANT VAN TASSEL'S  
HOME BURNED BY THE BRITISH, 17TH NOVEMBER, 1777

roads afforded easier travel, and were more frequently used. The Van Tassel homes were situated here, on level ground, as were those of many of their neighbors, and the henroosts and pigpens of the valley farmers offered superior inducements to the Cowboy-Skinners than did those upon the rocky heights, which were more difficult of access and less safe of approach. On one occasion a marauding Hessian, hiding behind a large boulder, on the farm of Lieutenant Van Tassel, was shot and killed, and his body buried under an apple tree standing near; and later still, in a sharp skirmish near the Van Tassel home, five more Hessians were killed and their bodies likewise buried under the same tree. Captain John Romer told the tale to his grandson, John C. L. Hamilton, and pointed out to him the place of burial. The younger man, to test the accuracy of the story, dug down and found the bones of the soldiers just where his grandsire had located them. He took some of them as souvenirs, and having been invited to prepare and read a paper on "The Allied Armies in Westchester County" before the New York Historical Society, did so, and on that occasion exhibited these Hessian bones as vouchers attesting the accuracy of his paper, and likewise the generosity of Westchester County in offering hospitable graves to its invaders.

Shortly after the close of the Revolutionary War, John Romer married Leah Van Tassel, only daughter of Lieutenant Cornelius Van Tassel and Elizabeth Storms, his wife, and then he and Lieutenant Van Tassel, in 1793, erected upon the site of Lieutenant Van Tassel's former residence, that was burned by the British in 1777, the noted stone and frame dwelling, still standing, that was designated and used for more than fifty years as the Town House, and place for holding all the elections and public meetings of the Town of Greenburg. The annual muster of the militia for a large portion of the county was held here; also the meetings of Solomon's Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons, which was



organized after the Revolution, at Mount Pleasant. John Romer was made a member of this lodge in 1800, after which it was moved to White Plains, and from there to the Van Tassel-Romer house in Greenburg. It was here, in 1805, that Honorable Daniel D. Tompkins, who became Governor of the State and afterward Vice-President of the United States, was first admitted a member of the Masonic fraternity.

On the sixth day of April, 1799, John Romer was commissioned First Lieutenant in the Company of Light Infantry, Westchester County Militia, commanded by Captain Isaac Van Wart, one of André's captors. Captain Van Wart resigned March 8, 1803, and Lieutenant Romer was promoted to the captaincy of the company, which was assigned to the southern command, including New York and Long Island. During Governor Tompkins's administration, Captain Romer took an active part in organizing the various companies and battalions of militia to complete the several quotas of troops called for by Acts of Congress, and was one of the first to engage in repairing Fort Washington, on the upper end of Manhattan Island. He resigned his captain's commission June 11, 1811, having spent upwards of twenty years, all told, in the military service of his country.

Captain Romer participated actively in all public matters and was one of the twenty-four prominent citizens of Westchester County who signed the celebrated certificate given to Isaac Van Wart, one of the captors of Major André, whose character had been fiercely assailed in the debate in Congress upon the bill to increase the pension of John Paulding, one of his associates in that memorable event.

At the dedication of the monument at Tarrytown in 1853, intended to mark the place of capture of the British major, Captain Romer, Honorable Henry J. Raymond and Washington Irving were the guests of honor, Captain Romer being the last Westchester County survivor of the Revolution and the only one then living who had seen Major André in



person. He had with him the pewter basin already mentioned. He designated for the committee the exact place of capture, where the great tulip tree formerly stood, and also pointed out the place of search on the east side of the present Broadway, and west of the little brook. The owner of the property objecting to locating the monument upon the spot designated, the committee in charge accepted the offer of a piece of land on the west side of the highway, some distance south of the actual place of capture, which was generously deeded to them by Mr. Taylor, formerly a slave, who had purchased his freedom from bondage. Alexander Romer, son of Captain Romer, and also John L. Romer and John C. L. Hamilton, two of Captain Romer's grandsons, were present on the occasion of the dedication of the monument.

Captain Romer and his wife Leah had a family of thirteen children born to them, viz: Elizabeth, Catherine, Christena, Nancy, Phoebe, Angeline, Cornelius, Ardenas, Hiram; Alexander, John, Edward and Isaac.

When Lieutenant Van Tassel and Captain John Romer built the stone and frame house in 1793, on the site of the house burned by the British, it became the home of Lieutenant Van Tassel and Elizabeth Storms, his wife, parents of Leah, and also of Captain Jacob Romer and Frena, his wife, parents of Captain John, and also of Captain John and his wife Leah, and here the family thus constituted lived and died.

A most interesting home this must have been for the grandparents and parents and for the grandchildren—thirteen of them—who came to bless and brighten this old-time family circle. What intensely interesting stories of war, of privation, of midnight alarms, of strategy, of achievement, of victory, of the joy of peace, of restored prosperity, must have been told in twilight hours when old and young were gathered about the huge fire-place, with its blazing logs! and it is more than probable a few stories of Indians, witches

and ghosts were thrown in from time to time by way of embellishment.

Captain John Romer died in his old homestead on May 27, 1855, and was buried by Solomon's Lodge in the churchyard of the Presbyterian church at Greenburg, beside Leah, his wife, near the last restingplace of his lifelong friend, Isaac Van Wart. The funeral services were conducted by Reverend Victor M. Hurlburt, of the First Reformed Church of Yonkers. After a brief service at the house, the cortege, more than a mile in length, proceeded to the old church at Elmsford, the members of Solomon's Lodge marching upon either side of the hearse. Reverend Mr. Hurlburt, after reading selections from the Scriptures, chose a part of the 31st verse of chapter 49 of Genesis, "There I buried Leah," as a basis for an eloquent address, which was followed by the Masonic burial rites about the open grave in the adjoining churchyard.



Remember,



Friendship.

*There's naught but what's good to be understood  
by a free and accepted Mason.*

**CAPT. JOHN ROMER,**

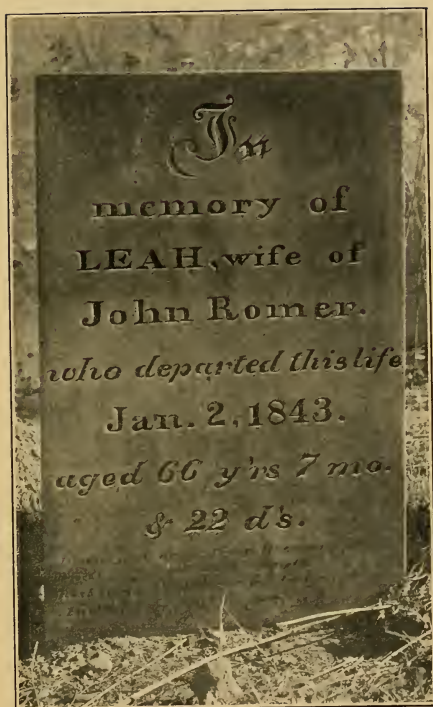
**BORN**

**NOV. 10, 1764,**

**DIED.**

**MAY 27, 1855.**

*Beneath this stone here one doth lie,  
Whom God himself did fawn to die.  
My remains must slumber in the ground  
Till the last trumpet's joyful sound,  
Then burst my chains in sweet surprise  
And in my Saviour's image rise.*



In  
memory of  
LEAH, wife of  
John Romer.  
*who departed this life*  
Jan. 2, 1843.  
*aged 66 y'rs 7 mo.*  
*& 22 d's.*



## HE AIDED ANDRÉ'S CAPTORS.

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CAPTAIN JOHN ROMER, WHO DIED IN 1855, WESTCHESTER'S  
LAST REVOLUTIONARY SOLDIER.

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*Joined the Continental Army when only a boy—later, in the  
War of 1812, he once more served his Country.*

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The last surviving soldier of the Revolution living in Westchester County died in 1855. He was John Romer, a son of Jacob Romer, and was born on November 10, 1764, in the place now called East View, in the town of Greenburg, three miles east of Tarrytown. John Romer and his four elder brothers were private soldiers in the Revolutionary War. The captors of Major André—Williams, Paulding and Van Wart—together with James Romer, one of the five brothers, Yerkes, Dean and See, obtained their breakfast at the house of Jacob Romer on the morning of the capture, and there they had a luncheon prepared, which they carried away in a pewter basin. On their way to the Tarrytown Post Roads they stopped at the house of Archer Read and obtained a pack of cards, after which they proceeded to the places of their concealment—three taking places near the famous tulip tree, upon the new Post Road, and the other four remaining to guard the

old Post Road, about six hundred feet distant. After the capture the three led André up to where the others were stationed, and then the whole party proceeded directly to the house of Jacob Romer, where they remained and had their dinner. In their hurry to get André away from the public highway, the captors forgot the basin above mentioned containing their lunch, and while dinner was being prepared, John Romer, then a lad sixteen years old, was sent after it. Upon his return he accompanied the party to Colonel Sheldon's headquarters in North Castle, their route lying across lots and through the woods, in order to avoid the highways as much as possible. This is briefly the story of the capture of André as told by John Romer many years afterwards. He was selected in 1853 by the Monument Association to identify the exact spot where the capture took place, and selected a spot east of the present Post Road at Tarrytown. The monument was erected on the west side, because the property where the capture really took place could not be obtained for the purpose.

After the Revolution, John Romer married Leah, daughter of Cornelius Van Tassel, a lieutenant in the war in Colonel Drake's Regiment of Militia, organized October 23, 1775. Through his wife, John Romer became possessed of the Van Tassel farm, at Elmsford, upon which he built the house long afterwards used as the Greenburg Town House. This house was erected upon the site of the Van Tassel house, burned by the British in 1777, Leah, then an infant, and her mother being turned out into the cold of a November night that the structure might be destroyed. Captain Romer was one of the prominent Free Masons of the county in his day, having been admitted to Solomon's Lodge, of Mount Pleasant, in 1800. Solomon's Lodge, at that time, was in the settlement called Sparta, now a suburb of Sing Sing. Afterwards the Lodge was moved to White Plains; then it was moved to Elmsford, and then under a



reorganized charter it was placed in Tarrytown, where it has remained and flourished for many years.

In 1853, at the dedication of the monument to the captors of Major André, at Tarrytown, John Romer was a guest of honor as one of the few survivors of the Revolutionary soldiers. He died at Elmsford on May 27, 1855, ninety years and six months old, and was buried in the churchyard of the Reformed Church in that place, not far from the grave of Isaac Van Wart.

John Romer seems to have been particularly happy in having possessed during his life the respect and esteem of all those who knew him. All the local traditions and reports concerning him indicate that he was kind, honest and upright, a good citizen and a pleasant neighbor. The fact that he was a soldier at sixteen and again at the age of forty-eight, serving his country at the two extremes of life, as it were, is sufficient indication that in patriotism he was a worthy representative of the Westchester county yeoman, whose fidelity, perseverance and endurance did so much for the cause of American liberty in "the days that tried men's souls." —*New York Tribune*, July 6, 1896.

## ABRAHAM MARTLING.

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Abraham Martling lived on Beaver Hill, overlooking the Sawmill River Valley. He was born about the year 1763, and in 1784 was married to Frena Romer, daughter of Jacob and Frena Romer.

Previous to their marriage he was for a time a member of one of the militia regiments, and later, served in the Continental Line. In November, 1777, he, with several other men of the Sawmill River neighborhood, desiring to avenge the destruction of the Van Tassel homes, burned by the British a few nights previously, went to the cove at Wolfert's Roost, where the Water Guard kept their boats, where others joined them, manned one or more of the boats and proceeded swiftly and silently down the Hudson to Spuyten Duyvil Creek, where they succeeded in passing the British Guard boats without being observed, and then went to the landing place near the foot of the present 92nd Street, in New York City. Here they landed and climbed the cliffs, and went on to the residence of General Oliver Delancey, on the old Bloomingdale Road. The home was feebly defended, and the party obtained possession without trouble. Taking such articles as they could readily carry, they set the house on fire, and hurried back to their boats. Keeping within the shadow of the hills, they rowed swiftly back to the Hudson and across it to the dark shadows of the Palisades. Here they abandoned their boats and made their way along the shore to a point nearly opposite Wolfert's Roost—their starting place. On the return trip Abra-

ham Martling carried on his back a massive pair of brass andirons, as a souvenir of the night's events.

In 1779, Martling enlisted in Captain Schaffer's company of Colonel Armand's regiment of the New York Line, and served throughout the war, being at the battle of Yorktown when Lord Cornwallis surrendered.

Upon his marriage with Fanny Romer in 1784, he obtained a few acres of ground upon the extreme westerly end of the farm of Lieutenant Cornelius Van Tassel and John Romer, his brother-in-law. Here he erected a small dwelling up against the rocks, set out some fruit trees, and cultivated what little of the soil was available. Late in life he applied to the Government for a pension. In his petition, after setting forth his military services, he stated that he was extremely poor; that his debts amounted to five pounds; his cash in hand was fifty cents; that his real estate consisted of a few acres of mossy rock; that his dwelling was a hole in the ground with a roof over it, etc.

He got his pension. He died in that humble abode at 12:15 o'clock, A. M., January 1, 1841, 92 years of age, as stated by his nearest neighbor, Isaac Conkling, who was with him in his last moments. He was buried near the grave of Captain John Romer, in Elmsford Cemetery.

His widow, Fanny Romer Martling, applied for a pension in December, 1846. She died in 1850, and was buried in Rockland County.

## CHRISTINA VAN WORMER ROMER.

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Christina Van Wormer, daughter of Adrianus Van Wormer and his wife Hannatje Van Tassel, was born in Phillips Manor July 21, 1752; was baptized at the old Dutch church, September 6, 1758, with Dirck Van Tassel and wife as sponsors; was married to Hendrick Romer, Jr., February 26, 1777; died August 31, 1856, aged 104 years; buried beside her husband in the Romer plot in the old Dutch churchyard. She was a member of this church, but in her later years she attended church at Elmsford, where her funeral services were held, Reverend Abel T. Stewart officiating.

Mrs. Romer's husband, Hendrick Romer, was first a member of the local militia, and afterwards enlisted in the Continental Line, leaving her with only a young brother and a slave in charge of the farm. She was an ardent patriot, and possessed a strong love for her country. When conversing afterwards upon the scenes and events of the war, she would become greatly animated—too much so to express herself in the English language, so would take up the Dutch, which was familiar to her, and give forcible expression to her sentiments in approbation of her countrymen, and in detestation of the conduct of the enemy. Her auditors would be sensibly moved by her earnestness and would realize the spirit of the men and women who participated in the struggles and sufferings of the war. No one could forget her manner when at the age of 100 years, her face brightened with laughter, yet her eyes suffused with tears, she told of how a party of British

troops, taking possession for several days of her home, compelled her to bake bread for them, and how, several Americans having concealed themselves in the rocky fastness of Farcus Hott, nearby, her husband among them, she would, whenever opportunity offered, catch up a loaf under her short gown and run out and throw it to her friends under the rock.

Possessing a rugged constitution, her health remained good almost to the last. She kept her own apartments, boiled her own kettle, maintained her own table, and until a short time before her death, would walk a mile or more to the grocery to obtain her supplies. She was very companionable, especially with those who could speak the Dutch language. Her Dutch Bible was ever within her reach, and she seemed to know its great truths as she did her alphabet.

Her husband, Hendrick Romer, died July 23, 1831, aged 79 years.

## JAN CORNELIUS VAN TEXELL (VAN TASSEL.)

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Jan Cornelius Van Texell was the first of that name among the earliest Dutch settlers coming to New Netherlands. He was one of the well-known Van Texell family, of Holland, and emigrated to this country about the year 1630.

Sometime after his arrival, Wyandance, Sachem of Long Island, gave him his (Wyandance's) daughter in marriage, she being one of the fourteen Indian women taken into captivity by Ninigret, chief of the Narragansetts, and afterwards ransomed through the good offices of Lion Gardiner.

Of this marriage, one son was born, named after his father, Jan Cornelius Van Texell. He was baptized in the Dutch Church within Fort Amsterdam on Manhattan Island. This son was married in 1657 in New Amsterdam to Antje —. They had seven children, named Cornelius, Jacob, Jan, William, Catherine (who married Hendrick Lent), Margaret (who married Pieter Storm), and Sarah (who married Barent de Wit). These children were all baptized in the first Dutch Church within Fort Amsterdam. This family afterwards moved from New Amsterdam and settled in the Indian town of Appamacpo, in Westchester county, which became a part of the manor of Cortland. The farm occupied by Jan Cornelius Van Texell, 2nd, comprised nearly the whole of the village of Sing Sing. He was quite a prominent man in that neighborhood. He was appointed tax collector, and for a number of years prior to 1700, collected the taxes from this particular town and

paid them over to Chidley Brook, the colonial treasurer, as shown by the following receipts:

"Received from John Cornelius Van Texell by the hands of Col. Stephen Van Cortland, the sum of nine pounds, out of the four first taxes, and of such proportion of the same as becomes payable out of Westchester County and Town of Appamacpo.

"I say received this 31st day of July, 1694.

"CHIDLEY BROOK, Collector."

"Received from John Van Texell by the hands of Col. Stephen Van Cortland, the sum of four pounds ten shillings out of the six thousand pounds tax, and of such proportion of the same as becomes payable out of Westchester County and Town of Appamacpo..

"I say received this 26th of August, 1694.

"CHIDLEY BROOK, Collector."

Jan Cornelius Van Texell, wife Antje, and their seven children, were in the year 1697, all members of the old Dutch Church in Sleepy Hollow. One of his sons, Cornelius, married a woman named Antje, which was also his mother's name, and they settled in Phillipsburg, on a farm, being a part of the Phillips Manor, and situated in the Sawmill River Valley, containing about 200 acres of land, located about one mile south of the present village of Elmsford. Of this marriage a son was born, named Dirck, who was baptized April 24, 1699. He married Christina Buise, and had a son named Cornelius, baptized April 1, 1735. This son was later Lieutenant Cornelius Van Tassel, of the Revolution.

Jan Cornelius Van Tassel, 2d, had a son Jan, and he also had a son named Jan, being a great-grandson of Catoneras. This last-named Jan settled on a farm in Phillips Manor, near Tarrytown. When the first public highway to Albany was laid out in 1723, his house was the first house mentioned on the route of the highway, south of the old Dutch Church, and next south of this Van Tassel house was the house of Abraham Martling. This Jan Van Tassel was the first sexton mentioned in the records of the old

Dutch church at Sleepy Hollow, he having been appointed to march at the head of the cortège, in the absence of the minister, on funeral occasions. The Washington Irving High School now stands on a part of the farm then occupied by Sexton Jan Van Tassel.

Wyandance, the great sachem of Long Island, died in 1659. His daughter, known after her marriage to Van Texell as Catoneras, did not long survive her father. In 1705, her grandchildren, desiring to have the Colonial authorities grant to them a patent of lands on Long Island, of the dimensions of four miles by six, which Catoneras inherited from her father, petitioned the Governor and council as follows:

#### FIRST PETITION.

1705.

To his Excellency Edward Viscount Cornbury Cap<sup>t</sup> Gen<sup>l</sup> & Gov<sup>r</sup> in Chief in and over her Majesties Provinces of New York & New Jerseys and Vice Admirall of the Same in Council—

The humble Peticon of Cornelis van Texell Jacob Van Texell, Jan Van Texell & Willem van Texell Sonns of Jan Cornelisse van Texell latr Deceased and Hendrick Lent husband of Catharin one of the Daughters of the said John, Barent DeWit husband of Sarah another of the Daughters of the said John, and Pieter Storm husband of Margaret allso a Daughter of the said John,—Humbly Sheweth

That whereas yo<sup>r</sup> Pet<sup>rs</sup> father as heir to his mother Catonoras a native Indian of the Island of Nassauw who in her life time was Seized of a certain Tract or parcell of land lying and being on the Island aforesaid now in the County of Suffolk neer the Town of Huntington called by the natives Anendeiack in English Eader necks beach and so allong the Sound four miles or thereabouts untill the fresh Pond called by the natives Assawanama where a Creeck runs into the Sound and from the Sound running into the woods Six miles or thereabouts And yo<sup>r</sup> Pet<sup>rs</sup> being all Christians and professing the holy Protestant Religion and knowing that tho the heathen were never disturbed in the Peaceable possession of their lands & Inheritances in this Governm<sup>t</sup> yo<sup>r</sup> Pet<sup>rs</sup> as Christians would allso very willingly hold the Same by her Majesties Letters Pettent under the Seal of this Province.



Yo<sup>r</sup> Pet<sup>rs</sup> therefore humbly Pray yo<sup>r</sup> Excellency to grant them a Pattent for the land aforesaid Accordingly.

And yo<sup>r</sup> Pet<sup>rs</sup> as in Duty bound shall Ever Pray &c.

Cornelis Van Texel  
the Mark of

X

Jacob van Texell  
Jan Van Texel  
Willen van Texel

The marke of

S

Hendrick Lent  
Barent de Wit

The mark of

P S

Pieter Storm

(Endorsed)

Petition of Cornelis van Texell  
and others.

30 July 1705. Read, to lye upon y<sup>e</sup> Table.

Probably no action was taken under this first petition; so in 1713, the grandchildren presented a second petition, on which an order was granted, referring the matter to a Committee or Official Board, to consider and report whether a survey of the lands should be made, and in due season a report was filed in favor of such a survey, viz:

## SECOND PETITION.

1713.

To his Excellency Robert Hunter Esq<sup>r</sup>  
Capt Gen<sup>l</sup> & Gov<sup>r</sup> in Chief in and over her  
Maties Provinces of New York and New Jer-  
sey and the Territories depending thereon in  
America and Vice Admirall of the Same And  
the Hon<sup>bl</sup> Councill of the Province of New  
York—

The humble Peticon of Cornelis Van Texell Jacob van Texell,  
Jan van Texell William van Texell, Catarin Lent, Barent De Wit  
and Pieter Storm all Children and Coheirs of Jan Cornelis van  
Texell late deceased

Most humble Sheweth

That yo<sup>r</sup> Petition<sup>rs</sup> Said fathers mother was an Indian native  
Sachem in this Province called Catoneras on the Island Nassauw

then called Long Island and her relacons being owners of Sundry large Tracts of land on the said Island did give unto the Said Catoneras the Pet<sup>rs</sup> grandmother in part of her fathers Inheritance a Certain Tract of Land called Crap Meadow Scituate on the Island aforesaid in Suffolk County running along the Sound four Miles and Six miles into the woods or thereabouts. And yo<sup>r</sup> Pet<sup>rs</sup> being all Christians and members of the Protestant Church and being willing to enjoy their Inheritance by Patent under the Crown as all other her Majasties Subiets of this Province do enjoy and hold their lands

They therefore do most humbly pray that they may have a Warrant to the Surveyor Generall of this Province to lay out the said Tract of Land for yo<sup>r</sup> Petition<sup>rs</sup> & that upon the return thereof they may have a Patent under the great Seale of this Province under Such moderate Quitrent as to yo<sup>r</sup> Excy and yo<sup>r</sup> hono<sup>rs</sup> shall seem meet.

And yo<sup>r</sup> Pet<sup>rs</sup> as in duty bound shall ever Pray etc.

New York 15th May 1713.

Cornelis Van Texel  
Jacob vn Texel  
Johannes Van Texel

May it please y<sup>r</sup> Excy

In obedience to your Excys order in Council of the 21<sup>st</sup> of May last we have Considerd the aforewritten peticon of Cornelis Van Texell and others and are humbly of opinion y<sup>r</sup> Excy may Grant the Warrt of Survey therein peticoned for all which is nevertheless humbly submitted by

Y<sup>r</sup> Excys most obed<sup>t</sup> humble Servts

N. York Aprill  
16th 1714

A. D: Peyster  
S: Staats  
Rip Van Dam  
Caleb Heathcote  
John Barberie  
J. Byerley

(Endorsed)

The Petition of Cornelis Van Texell & ors,  
21<sup>st</sup> of May 1713 read & referred to

The Gent<sup>n</sup> of this Board or any five of them.

Jan Cornelius Van Tassel, Sr., was selected to represent the Long Island Indians before Commissioners appointed to settle the wars between the Pequots, Narragansetts and other tribes and was present at meetings of the Commissioners held at Boston and elsewhere. No record has been found as to date of decease or place of burial.

## LIEUTENANT CORNELIUS VAN TASSEL.

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Lieutenant Cornelius Van Tassel, of the South Battalion First Regiment, of Westchester militia, of Revolutionary days, commanded by Colonel Drake, was a lineal descendant of the noted Van Texel family of Holland. His ancestor, Jan Cornelius Van Texel being one of the first to emigrate when it was decided to occupy and settle New Netherlands.

Jan Cornelius Van Texel, the immigrant, married, shortly after his arrival, Catoneras, the daughter of an Indian Chief, named Wyandance, of the Montauk Tribe of Indians, living on Long Island. Of that union a son was born, who was named after his father, Jan Cornelius Van Tassel. This son married Antje — and had seven children. Himself, wife and their seven children were in the year 1697, all members of the old Dutch Church, in Sleepy Hollow. One of his sons was also named Cornelius Van Tassel, who married a woman named Antje, likewise, and they settled in Phillipsburg. The members of the Van Tassel family had at a very early date become so numerous that it was customary to designate the various branches by special names, such as "Gentleman Bill," "Cooper Bill," "Crazy Pete," "Weaver John," and one "Devil Bill," etc., saints, sinners and patriots.

The farm which this Cornelius Van Tassel and family occupied as a tenant of the Phillipses, was situated along the Sawmill River, and comprised about 200 acres of land. It is located about one mile south of the present

village of Elmsford. The adjoining farm on the south was occupied by Peter Van Tassel, a member of the County Committee of Safety for the year 1777, while the farm on the west extended to the Hudson River and was occupied by Captain Jacob Van Tassel, a relative of Lieutenant Cornelius. The house of Captain Jacob was the headquarters of the Water Guard which Washington Irving has made famous in his *Wolfert's Roost*, which was purchased by Mr. Irving and occupied by him as his home under the name of "Sunnyside."

This Cornelius had a son named Dirck, who married Christina Buise, and had a son Cornelius, who was baptized April 1, 1735. This son was a lieutenant of the Revolution and the subject of this sketch. He married Elizabeth Storms, October 16, 1756, and had two children, Cornelius baptized April 24, 1759, and Leah, born May 20, and baptized June 17, 1775. Cornelius, the son, was a celebrated rifleman and a member of the First Colonial Westchester Regiment. He escaped capture by the British Dragoons, commanded by Captains Emerick and Barnes on the night of November 17, 1777, when his father's house was burned, and he, the father, Lieutenant Van Tassel, taken prisoner. Cornelius, the son, died January 3, 1780, as the result of his exposure at the time of his father's capture. Mary, a sister of Lieutenant Van Tassel, married Lieutenant Zybout Acker, Jr., a grandson of Wolfert, first owner of the Roost.

Leah Van Tassel, the infant daughter of Lieutenant Cornelius Van Tassel, who, with her mother, was driven out of the burning house, subsequently, after the Revolution, married John Romer, later known as Captain John (son of Jacob and Frena Romer), who was born November 10, 1764, in what is now called "East View,"—three miles east of Tarrytown. Leah died January 2, 1843, and is buried in Greenburg churchyard.

Lieutenant Cornelius Van Tassel was elected an officer

of one of the four companies organized in the upper Manor of Phillipsburg, and was commissioned by the Provincial Congress in session in New York, and assigned to the Tarrytown Company First Regiment of Westchester County Militia, under date of September 2, 1775, this being the earliest mention of the name Tarrytown yet discovered.

Prior to the Revolution, he was one of the most extensive and prosperous farmers in the Sawmill River Valley.

In those early times it was customary for well-to-do farmers to tan their own leather, which was generally made up once a year into shoes and foot gear by a peripatetic cobbler, who boarded around among his customers for various periods of time, according to the size of the family. In order to prevent the Tories from carrying off the leather, he caused the vats to be secreted beside a brook in a dense thicket of brush and vines, upon a portion of his farm. The enemy came very near discovering their location, as they were about to refresh themselves from the brook, but they fortunately became engaged in wrangling over a bottle of rum, which was accidentally broken in the *melée*, which, from that incident, has since been known as "Rum Brook," and that name was given to it in the deeds describing the property in the year 1785.

Although Lieutenant Cornelius lost everything by the ravages of war, including his only son, he managed, at its close, to purchase from the Commissioners of Forfeiture the Sawmill River Farm occupied by his ancestors and himself as tenants under the Phillipses, and recovered in some degree from his losses, but found himself unable to rebuild his house until his daughter, Leah, married John Romer. He then, joining hands with his son-in-law, erected, in 1793, a new substantial stone and frame house upon the site of his old home, burned by the British in 1777, and in his new home Lieutenant Cornelius Van Tassel and his wife Elizabeth, Captain Jacob Romer and wife Frena, and Captain John Romer and wife Leah, lived and died.

James Delancy, the Tory sheriff of the county, was the colonel of a Westchester county regiment of militia that had been organized for a number of years before the Revolution. Many of the members of that regiment who had joined it before the war, were subsequently enrolled as members of the South Battalion of Westchester County Patriots in the latter militia regiment organized to defend the colony against British oppression. These members of the new Colonial regiment were looked upon by the British as deserters. A certain Colonial act of enrollment required that in each militia precinct, all persons resident therein sixteen years of age and upwards, should be enrolled as being subject to military duty. The officers charged with the duty of making this enrollment in some cases described the persons enrolled as including all "Whigs, Tories, sick, lame, lazy and distrest." The enforcement of this enrollment act devolved principally upon the members of the Committee of Safety, and the performance of their duties rendered them particularly obnoxious to the Tories.

The Tory Governor Tryon, in command at King's Bridge, directed Colonel Delancey to form a company out of his regiment which were called "Rangers." They were mounted, and the governor to stimulate enlistments in that branch of the service, offered to the men of that command a reward of twenty-five dollars for the capture of every Committeeman of Safety, and five dollars each for every so-called deserter. This command soon grew to be a very effective force. It was given the name of Cow Boys, as their thorough knowledge of the roads and county was a great help to them in the particular line of cattle capture.

On November 17, 1777, Governor Tryon directed Captains Emerick and Barnes of his cavalry to carry out his instructions in respect to the arrest of committeemen and deserters. They went out on such an errand and succeeded in taking Committeeman Peter Van Tassel and Lieutenant Cornelius Van Tassel prisoners and burned their dwellings





FARCUS HOTT



and barns. Captain John Romer gives the following account of the affair :

"The night on which the houses were surprised and burned was one of the coldest of the season. Lieutenant Van Tassel, on the first alarm, sprang from the window and tried to escape, being almost naked. He was taken prisoner, but never recovered from the exposure of that night. The Tory captain Joshua Barnes, acted as guide for Emerick that night, and his voice was heard above the tumult: 'The houses are both owned by d——d rebels, burn them.' My wife Leah Van Tassel, was the only daughter of Cornelius, and she was the infant taken out of the house in a blanket by a soldier, laid on the snow, and the mother, distracted, was seeking her babe, when he told her where the child was. The only son, Cornelius, Jr., fled for safety, half naked, to the roof of the house and held on by the chimney, from which, when the fire began to reach him, he jumped to the ground. He escaped that night, but caught cold from which he never recovered."

Another account states that Cornelius, Jr., escaped capture on this occasion by concealing his head and face with a blanket, and assisting the British in carrying out the furniture from the burning dwelling until he could get far enough away in the darkness to make his escape by running to the Sawmill River with the British in full chase, as far as the little stream, which they found frozen over but were unable to cross without breaking their way through the ice. This is what the fleeing Cornelius had done and was well on his way toward the Farcus Hott, the patriots' place of shelter on the brow of the hill, now called Beaver Mountain, overlooking the Van Tassel home. Returning from the chase, the British gathered the horses and cattle of their captives, Lieutenant Cornelius Van Tassel and Peter, his neighbor, and having tied the hands of the prisoners to their horses' tails, compelled them to drive the herd to the Tory camp at King's Bridge.

In the meantime, one of the British soldiers, more humane than the others, procured, from the loot of the burning house, a blanket, (some accounts say it was a feather bed), to cover Mrs. Van Tassel and her child, who had been placed on the frozen ground beside the little brook only a little way west of the smoking ruins. After the crew left

on their return march, Mrs. Van Tassel and her daughter took refuge in a dirt cellar, where she remained sometime until aroused by the whinny of a favorite horse, which had broken away from the herd and returned to its home. Mounting this horse, she rode away to her father's house. This outrage on the part of the British and Tories, caused great excitement and indignation throughout all the neighborhood, and was the subject of sharp correspondence between the commanders of the opposing forces.

General Samuel H. Parsons, then in command, sent from his headquarters at Mamaroneck, November 21, 1777, the following letter by flag of truce to Governor Tryon, commanding the British forces at King's Bridge:

"SIR:—Adding to the natural horrors of war, the most wanton destruction of property, is an act of cruelty unknown to civilized nations and unaccustomed in war, until the servants of the King of Great Britain have convinced the impartial world, no act of inhumanity, no stretch of despotism, are too great to exercise towards those they term rebels. Had any apparent advantage been derived from burning the house on Philip's Manor last Monday, there would have been some reason to justify the measure; but when no benefit whatever can be proposed by burning those buildings and stripping the women and children of necessary apparel to cover them from the severity of a cold night, and captivating and leading in triumph to your lines, in the most ignominious manner, the heads of those families, I know not what justifiable cause to assign for those acts of cruelty; nor can I conceive a necessity for your further order to destroy Tarrytown. You cannot be insensible it is every day in my power to destroy the houses and buildings of Col. Philips, and those belonging to the family of Delancey, each as near your lines as those buildings were to my guards; and notwithstanding your utmost diligence, you cannot prevent the destruction of every house this side of King's Bridge. It is not fear; it is not want of opportunity that has preserved those buildings, but a sense of the injustice and savageness of such a line of conduct has saved them; and nothing but necessity will induce me to copy examples of this sort so often set by your troops.

It is not my inclination, sir, to war in this manner against the inhabitants within your lines, who suppose themselves within your King's protection. But necessity will oblige me to retaliate in kind upon your friends, to procure the exercise of that justice which humanity used to dictate; unless your explicit disavowal of your two captains, Emmerick and Barnes, shall convince me those houses were burned without your knowledge and against your order. I am, sir, your humble servant,

SAMUEL H. PARSONS.

KING'S BRIDGE CAMP,  
Nov. 23, 1777.

SIR:—Could I possibly conceive myself accountable to any revolted subject of the King of Great Britain I might answer your letter received by the flag of truce yesterday, respecting the conduct of the party under Capt. Emmerick's command.

Upon the taking of Peter and Cornelius Van Tassel; I have however candor enough to assure you, as much as I abhor every principle of inhumanity, or ungenerous conduct, I should were I in more authority, burn every committee-man's house within my reach. As I deem those agents the wicked instruments of the continued calamities of this country; and in order sooner to purge this country of them I am willing to give twenty-five dollars for every acting committeeman, who shall be delivered up to the King's troops. I guess before the end of the next campaign, they will be torn in pieces by their own countrymen, whom they have forcibly dragged in opposition to their principles and duty, (after fining them to the extent of their property) to take up arms against their lawful sovereign, and compelling them to exchange their happy constitution for paper, rags, anarchy and distress.

"The ruins from the conflagration of New York by the emissaries of your party last year, remain a memorial of their tender regards for their fellow beings exposed to the severity of a cold night.

"This is the first correspondence I have held with the King's enemies on my part in America, and as I am immediately under the command of Sir Henry Clinton, your future letters dictated with decency would be more properly directed to his excellency. I am, Sir, your most obedient servant,

WILLIAM TRYON,  
Maj. Gen'l."

To Gen'l Parsons.

This letter was received by General Parsons on Sunday, the 23d inst. It is not known that he issued any orders in reference to it, but its contents were made public, and acted upon by a party of Van Tassel's company and neighbors, who upon Tuesday night, the 25th, under command of Abraham Martling, a Continental soldier, better known as "Brom" Marlin, who lived and died upon a portion of Lieutenant Van Tassel's farm, started by boat from the house of Lieutenant Jacob Van Tassel, the headquarters of the Water Guard, (Wolfert's Roost) and proceeded to New York, successfully passing the British Guard boats posted at Spuyten Duyvil. They landed within the limits of the city and penetrated to the house of Governor Delancey at Bloomingdale, which they burned.

Lieutenant Van Tassel and Committeeman Peter Van Tassel were held as prisoners by the British and confined for eleven months in the old Provost Gaol, in New York, located where the Hall of Records now stands. The British looked upon them as civilians and declined their frequent requests to be exchanged. During their confinement they were visited by Colonel Alexander Hamilton, appointed by General Washington, and a Mr. Lorrington, appointed by Lord Howe, commissioners to examine into the conditions of the various prisons. The prisoners at the Provost Gaol were told that they, being committeemen or civilians, the commissioners had no authority to act in respect to their exchange, no arrangements having been made by the opposing military forces for the exchange of civilian prisoners, and that they must apply for release through the Governor of the Colony, which they did by petition. Orders were then given that prominent Tories should be arrested and held as hostages for exchange. The first to be arrested was Alexander White, High Sheriff of Tryon County. He was required upon trial at Albany to take an oath of allegiance, which he refused to do, and was then sent to prison. His wife, thereupon, interceded, and obtained permission to visit Governor Clinton at Albany in an effort to obtain her husband's release. She afterwards went to New York and succeeded in having Lieutenant Van Tassel paroled and sent up to Governor Clinton to be exchanged for the Sheriff, which exchange was accomplished.

The records show that the release of the Lieutenant and the Committeeman from prison was effected on October 17, 1778, making just eleven months of captivity.

The following account appears in the book of Audited Accounts pertaining to the Revolution in the State Archives at Albany:

## "THE STATE OF NEW YORK, DR.

"To Lieutenant Cornelius Van Tassel.	
"To pay while in captivity, from Nov. 17, 1777, to the	
17th October 1778 .....	£117.06.8
"To retained rations .....	13.15.0
"Audited 1784"	£131. 1.8

Out of the thirty-nine members of the Van Tassel family who were engaged in the Continental military service, sixteen were connected with the South Battalion of the First Regiment of Westchester Militia. A number of sanguinary encounters with the British forces took place in the neighborhood of the charred ruins of the Van Tassel homes. The bodies of six Hessian soldiers are still interred upon a portion of Lieutenant Van Tassel's old farm, one of them having been shot while hiding behind a large boulder, which is still seen near the Worthington Memorial Church.

In 1781, when the American and French forces were encamped near the Van Tassel farm, Lieutenant Van Tassel furnished, for the use of the army, 3,000 fence rails. The war chest was practically empty at that time and he was compelled to wait seven years for payment for his rails.

In January, 1783, under direction of Captain Daniel Williams, he proceeded with thirty-three men to attempt the capture of Colonel Delancey at his quarters in Westchester. The party did not find the Colonel at home, but looted his house and hastily withdrew. After crossing the Croton River, deeming themselves safe, they halted and exposed their loot for sale or division. While so employed they were surprised by a party of the enemy sent in pursuit. One of the militiamen was killed, seven taken prisoners and several wounded. Among the latter was John Paulding, one of André's captors.

Lieutenant Cornelius Van Tassel died March 6, 1820, aged eighty-five years, and his wife, Elizabeth Storm, died March 13, 1825, aged eighty-seven years, and both were buried in the churchyard of the old Dutch church at Sleepy Hollow.

## THE STORM FAMILY.

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Dirck Storm came to this country from Utrecht, Holland, via Amsterdam, in 1662. Arms: Field, a ship at sea under storm sail. Crest: The helmet of a knight, vizor closed. Affronté, surmounted by eagle's wings. Motto: "Vertrouwt" (In God we trust). His wife, Maria Pieters, and three sons, Gregoris, Pieter and David, came with him. He settled first in Harlem, then went to Brooklyn and Flatbush, where he served as town clerk in 1670. In 1691, he was clerk of the Sessions from Orange County, and in 1697, he had removed to Phillips Manor. Here he became identified with the church and was selected November 3, 1715, to make up a church record from memoranda kept by Abraham de Revier. This record shows that the church had from its organization in 1680-5 down to April 18, 1716, the date of his report, seventy-five members, and that the church in Cortland Manor had twenty-eight members when the two churches consolidated about April 21, 1697. His list of baptisms from April 21, 1697, to April 18, 1716, comprise 319 names of children, their parents and sponsors. He retired as clerk at date of his report. The record of baptisms in the Storm family shows that for a number of generations the name Gaurus (Gregoris) was a favorite, the desire evidently being to keep in remembrance the first of that name coming to this country.

Gregoris Storm and wife Engeltje had a son Nicholas, who married Rachel Conkling, March 19, 1719. At that time both were living at Phillips Manor. To them was born



*Die Remigius*  
Cornelius Van Tassel he departed  
this life March 6<sup>th</sup> A.D. 1821  
In the 85<sup>th</sup> Year of his age.

*Also*

Elizabeth the Wid<sup>o</sup> of Cornelius  
Van Tassel she departed this life  
March 13<sup>th</sup> A.D. 1825  
In the 87<sup>th</sup> Year of her age.



a son, Abraham, and a daughter, Elizabeth, and another son, Isaac. He, Nicholas, married for his second wife Maritje Dutcher, daughter of Johannis, and had a son, Nicholas, Jr., and two daughters, Maritje and Rachel. Rachel married Isaac Van Wart, one of André's captors.

Elizabeth Storm, daughter of Nicholas, senior, married Lieutenant Cornelius Van Tassel, October 16, 1756, and to them was born a son, Cornelius, Jr., and a daughter Leah, who married John Romer.

Nicholas Storm, senior, lived at Storm's Bridge, now known as Elmsford, and was enrolled as a member of the Westchester Militia Regiment. Abraham, his son, likewise lived at Storm's Bridge and maintained a tavern there, which was partly burned by the Tories the same night the Van Tassel houses were burned. He was for a short time captain of the Tarrytown Company of militia; was major of the First Regiment of Minute Men, and was also a member of the Committee of Public Safety in 1776-7.

Pieter Storm, son of Dirck, the immigrant, married Margaret Van Tassel, daughter of Jan Cornelius, 2d, and granddaughter of Catoneras, daughter of Wyandance.

David Storm, son of Dirck, was chosen as one of the deacons of the old Dutch Church, and afterwards served several terms as elder.

Nicholas Storm, Jr., enlisted July, 1776, in Captain William Dutcher's company, and was stationed at Tarrytown for six weeks. In October, he again enlisted in the same company, also in January, 1777, and again in January, 1778. In May, 1779, he served under Captain Daniel Martling.

## SKETCHES FROM SOUVENIR VOLUME OF MONUMENT DEDICATION AT TARRYTOWN.

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On the 19th day of October, 1894, there was dedicated at Tarrytown, N. Y. a Revolutionary soldiers' monument, erected in Sleepy Hollow Cemetery. A souvenir volume containing a record of the proceedings on the occasion of the dedication and brief sketches of the lives of some of the sturdy Westchester County patriots who were active participants in the great struggle for independence was compiled by Marcius R. Raymond, Esq., of Tarrytown, secretary of the monument committee, and published by the committee in 1894.

From this volume the following extracts have been taken :

### *A. Statement by Lieutenant Samuel Youngs.*

"In the month of December, 1776, all the Continental troops having been withdrawn from what was then established as the American lines, which was from Tarrytown on the Hudson River eastwardly by the way of the house of my father, Joseph Youngs, and the White Plains to the East River, the inhabitants residing on these lines were left exposed to the plundering parties of British refugees, who with some British troops held possession of the southern part of the county. The Committee of Public Safety ordered out the Militia of that part of the county who belonged to Colonel Hammond's Regiment, who were accordingly stationed on the Tuckahoe Road, and some of them

at the houses of Peter Van Tassel and Cornelius Van Tassel on the Sawmill River Road; that about 120 of Colonel Hammond's regiment were continued in the American Service on those lines from the beginning of December, 1776, until May, 1777.

"That in the month of August, 1777, a regiment of levies was raised in the Counties of Dutchess and Westchester, consisting of about 500 men, and placed under the command of Colonel Ludington and Lieutenant Colonel Hammond, for the term of four months. In the month of November or December, Colonel Ludington's Regiment was discharged, having served the period of their enlistment, and the defence of the American lines was again left entirely to the Whig inhabitants; that Colonel Hammond ordered out a part of his regiment for the protection of those who were daily sustaining serious losses from the plundering British refugees; and those lines were wholly defended at that period by the Whig militia of Colonel Hammond's Regiment, from October, 1777, to the beginning of May, 1778.

"That sometime in March, 1778, Colonel Emerick, who commanded about 300 men composed of British and Refugees, sent out Lieutenant Althouse with thirty-two men, to take and bring in the cattle of Joseph Youngs, and of other Whig inhabitants of the neighborhood.

"This deponent, Samuel Youngs, was cutting wood about one-quarter of a mile from his father's, the said Joseph Youngs' house, when he was informed that a party of the British were approaching his said father's house. He immediately started for his home, but when he had arrived within fifty yards, he discovered the party of Althouse driving the stock from the yard. Then he ran toward the house of Sergeant John Dean, whom he soon met and informed him that the British were then driving off his father's cattle. Dean was well armed, and told the deponent that he would find arms and ammunition at his house, and that in the meantime he would endeavor to get a shot at

them. The deponent accordingly proceeded to Dean's house, and Mrs. Dean handed him three muskets and two bunches of cartridges, while the enemy were within 300 yards of them. That deponent then soon got to the south of Althouse's party of marauders, knowing where he would fall in with about twenty of the Militia; during which time John Dean, Jacob Acker and Hendrick Romer had attacked the enemy and commenced firing upon them. This alarmed the Militia so that when the deponent arrived at the house where they were stationed, he found about twenty-five men ready for the contest, but without an officer to command them. The Militia concealed themselves behind a stone wall near the road that Althouse must pass with his men and the stock which he had taken. They were permitted to approach within about fifty yards before the Militia opened fire. Althouse had divided his party, one part driving the stock, while the main party was approaching the stone wall. Before the main attack was made, John Dean and his companions, Jacob Acker and Hendrick Romer, had commenced their attack on the party driving the stock and had killed a man named Mike Hart. Immediately after Hart fell we opened fire, killing one and wounding three. We then sprang over the wall to attack them with the bayonet. Althouse gave us his fire as we were on the wall, by which John Buchanan was shot through the shoulder and Nicholas Banker through the thigh. Althouse immediately abandoned his plunder and retreated. We were then joined by John Dean and his companions, and after a running fight of about four miles, we succeeded in killing or taking Althouse and all of his men, except his guide.

"The Militia on or near these lines were again called out and remained in position until the middle of January, 1779, when Colonel Aaron Burr took command with about 500 Continental troops. A number of young men of that neighborhood enlisted to serve under him as horsemen at that time, of whom were the deponent and Sergeant John Dean.

Colonel Burr was succeeded in April, 1779, by Major William Hull, who was driven from those lines in June following, by a party of British troopers under command of Colonel Tarleton.

"After the defeat and retreat of Hull, the Whig inhabitants of Colonel Hammond's Regiment immediately formed themselves under some of the officers of said regiment and for a time kept the plundering parties of refugees in check, until almost all the stock was driven back into the country for safety, when the Militia also had to retire over the Croton River. That in the winter of 1780 deponent engaged to serve as one of the guides to the Continental troops stationed on those lines. That some time in the month of September while deponent was a guide to the troops on those lines, and then under the command of Colonel Jameson, whose headquarters were at a place called Mile Square, in said County of Westchester, about the 23rd day of September, 1780, the deponent well recollects that the said John Dean, Isaac Van Wart, David Williams, John Paulding, James Romer, Abraham Williams, John Yerks and Isaac See arrived at the quarters of Colonel Jameson, bringing with them a prisoner who said his name was John Anderson, together with a number of papers concealed in the boot of the prisoner at the time he was taken, and that a few days afterwards it was discovered that the prisoner was Major John André, Adjutant General of the British Army, etc."

*B. Statement by John Dean.*

"One little matter that occurred in our county during the Revolutionary War, I will try to relate. One Lieutenant Althouse, and Lieutenant Barnes (of Delancey's Regiment) made an excursion into our county, with twenty-two men each. Lieutenant Althouse came up by the Sawmill River Road, and went up to the upper part of what is called Philips Manor, and collected quite a drove of cattle, and Barnes

went through the White Plains to North Castle, and collected quite another drove, and on Christmas morning Althouse came down the Sawmill River Road, and Barnes by the way of White Plains, about 9 or 10 o'clock in the morning; and the news spreading quickly, the Militia soon marched after them and overtook them above where Greenburg Church now stands, and began to attack them, but not in force sufficient to make a formidable attack. Captain Martling, at Tarrytown, was alarmed and rallied in haste with what part of his company he could collect, proceeded by the road to the bridge over the river, near the church, and joined the party already harassing the enemy; and the force by this time was so formidable that they were obliged to leave their drove and try to save themselves; but the Militia men, in hot pursuit, took some prisoners and killed others, so that not one escaped but James Husted, their guide; while the party under Barnes, at the White Plains, suffered the same fate; I believe not one escaped, and so both of the Tory parties lost their Christmas dinner of beef. It caused some rejoicing among our people, and the owners of the droves recovered their stock."

### *C. The Van Tassel Family.*

"To tell the story of Philipse Manor without a sketch of the Van Tassel family would be like leaving Hamlet out of the play. They were one of the most numerous and conspicuous families of the Manorial period, and were the very impersonation of some of its most marked characteristics. The blood of Thor was in their veins and their struggle for freedom in Friesland had made them veritable sons of Mars. Wherever a Van Tassel waved his gonfalon it was the signal for an onset against the enemy, and in the border warfare that waged with such fierceness on this Manor during the Revolution they were ever in the forefront.

"Jan Cornelius Van Tassel was the first of that name

known to have come to New Netherland. Among the first settlers to locate upon Philipse Manor were John, Jacob and Cornelius Van Tassel, grandsons of the first mentioned. They were the thirty-eighth, fifty-second and seventy-third persons whose names appear upon the roll of members of the old Dutch Church of Sleepy Hollow. Dirck, the son of Cornelius, was the twenty-fifth person baptized previous to 1699. In 1723 he married at the church in Hackensack, N. J., Christina Buise, daughter of Aaron Buise, who was an officer of the old Dutch Church, from 1743 to 1767. His five daughters and son Cornelius were all baptized at that church, the latter in 1734. A receipt given to Dirck Van Tassel by Frederick Philipse, dated December 22, 1767, for £6 2s. 6d., for rent of the farm, is still preserved. Lieutenant Cornelius married Elizabeth Storm, daughter of Nicholas, and sister of Captain Abraham Storm, the first Captain elected for the company that was known as the Tarrytown Company.

"When peace was proclaimed, Lieutenant Van Tassel purchased his old farm from the Commissioners of Forfeiture, but on account of the losses incurred, was unable to rebuild his dwelling. His only son having died from exposure received in fighting for his country, he postponed the affair until the marriage of his daughter Leah to John Romer, son of Jacob Romer, Senior, who with his four brothers had been active participants in the cause of Independence; and in 1793, they erected the dwelling still standing, of which a photo representation appears herewith, and where for upward of fifty years the annual town meetings of the township of Greenburg were held. Here Lieutenant Van Tassel and wife spent their remaining days. John Romer became captain in the War of 1812. He was not only a well-known man among men, but, it is said, was decided by vote at a general election to be the best looking man in the town! He died at the age of ninety, beloved by every one.



*D. The Martling Family.*

"An Abraham Martling lived on Beaver Hill, near the Sawmill River Valley. In his application for a pension, dated April 17, 1818, he says he was aged fifty-five; that he enlisted sometime in October, 1779, in Captain Shaffer's company, of Colonel Armand's regiment of horse and foot, N. Y. Line, and so continued in the service until May, 1783, when he was discharged at Charleston, South Carolina. That he was in the battle at Yorktown at the taking of Cornwallis. He was a pensioner from 1818, and died January 1, 1841. His widow, Fanny Romer Martling, applied for pension December 24, 1846. He was buried at Greenburg (Elmsford) Churchyard. He is said to have been with the party that went down the river in boats and raided and burned General Oliver Delancey's house, near Bloomingdale, on the night of Tuesday, November 25, 1777, in retaliation for the destruction of the Van Tassell houses in the Sawmill River Valley a few nights previous. Captain John Romer gives the following account of that affair: 'I don't know who commanded the party that burnt General Delancey's house on the 25th of November, 1777, but believe it was Captain Buchanan of the Water Guards. The party came down the river from above in whale boats with muffled oars and stopped at Tarrytown. After taking some volunteers on board they then went on down the river. They burnt the house and brought off considerable plunder.'

"Sergeant Isaac Martling, the story of whose tragic death still lives in tradition, as well as on the pages of history, and with all of its grim import is perpetuated on the moss-covered tombstone of his grave, was a son of Abraham Martling, senior, and a brother of Captain Daniel and Corporal David Martling. He had been a soldier in the French War, having enlisted in Captain Gilchrist's company, March 27, 1759, and mustered on May 1 of that year. On the original roll his age is given as seventeen at that time, his height five feet seven inches, with dark eyes and dark complexion.



"The account of his tragic death is thus related by Mrs. George Lawrence, now seventy-six years of age, and residing at Hartsdale, Westchester County, whose maiden name was Adaline Requa, granddaughter of Gabriel Requa, a soldier of the Revolution, and Elizabeth Martling, his wife, who was the daughter of Sergeant Isaac Martling: Her great-grandfather was killed in front of the old Martling house, at Tarrytown. He had been to the near-by spring, still in common use in that neighborhood, for a pail of water, and was just about to enter the house when he was murderously stricken down, inhumanly slain, as is recorded upon his tombstone, by Nathaniel Underhill, the 'inhumanity' of the act being aggravated by the fact that Sergeant Martling was unarmed as well as one-armed, and had no opportunity to defend himself. The Nathaniel Underhill who so slew this one-armed patriot of two wars was a notorious Tory who lived on the southern part of the Manor in the vicinity of Yonkers. It is said that Sergeant Martling had once caused his arrest, hence personal animosity sharpened his cruel hate. After independence was achieved, he found it convenient to retire to Nova Scotia, with other Tory refugees, and died there.

"Captain John Romer in his later years gave the following account of the affair: 'On the 26th of May, 1779, a party of refugees (Tories) suddenly came upon Tarrytown. The inhabitants drove their cattle in great alarm into the woods north of Pocantico Brook, on the first approach of the enemy. In consequence of their numbers, Captain Buchanan (of the Water Guards) had found it necessary to retreat across the Pocantico, where he lay in ambush awaiting their advance, but they did not go so far. At Tarrytown they killed Isaac Martling, or rather, Nathaniel Underhill killed him. Then they pushed for the house of James Requa, where a guard was kept during most of the War, which they surprised, but the whole party made their escape, except one, who was killed, and whose name was John Van

Tassel.' Captain Romer likewise gives an account of the killing of Polly or Katrine Buckhout. He says she was 'killed by a Yager rifleman belonging to a party under Emerick who were patrolling on the west side of the Sawmill River. She imprudently appeared at the door of the house with a man's hat on, when two hostile parties were near each other, and was killed by mistake for an enemy. The Yager fired without orders, and Emerick made apology, being much mortified at the occurrence. The house where this occurred was near to and a little above the Sawmill River Church."

*E. Statement of John Yerks.*

"John Yerks, of the town of Mount Pleasant, County of Westchester, being duly sworn, saith that he was seventy-seven years of age on the 11th day of November last. That he lived with his father at the beginning of the Revolutionary War, about one mile north of the house of Joseph Youngs, where the Americans generally kept their headquarters. That sometime about the 23rd of September, 1780, John Dean, together with the deponent, and John Paulding, Isaac Van Wart, David Williams, Abraham Williams, James Romer and Isaac See, being on a scouting party between the American and British outposts, proceeded near to the old Post Road, or what was then called the North River Road, near Tarrytown. That their object was to intercept droves of cattle that were frequently stolen and driven to the British troops. That the party there halted, and the better to effect their object, mutually agreed to separate. The said John Dean, James Romer, Abraham Williams and Isaac See, and the deponent, undertook to watch the private road about one-quarter of a mile east of the said Post Road, and Isaac Van Wart, John Paulding and David Williams were to remain on or near the old Post Road. That a short time after the said party had so separated, Isaac Van Wart, John Paulding and David Williams joined the others of the party on the top of the hill with a prisoner who called himself

John Anderson. The prisoner when taken had a horse, saddle and bridle, a gold watch and some money."

Another statement was made by John Yerks, under date of November 12, 1845, in which he said: "I am now eighty-seven years old. Six of us started from North Salem, being at that time either volunteers in the service or eight months' men. At Cross River we were joined by David Williams. We then passed Rundell's Mills on Cross River and so through Bedford to where Union Village now stands and, stopping at the widow Anderson's, inquired for news. She informed us that she had just come up from Morrisania, where there appeared to be great commotion among the British troops. We then proceeded about three-fourths of a mile further toward Tarrytown, and after resting awhile in a hay barrack, resumed our march and arrived in the night at Jacob Romer's, situated a quarter of a mile from the White Plains and Tarrytown Road, where we took supper. We then took advice and held a council of war. That night we passed at Jacob Romer's, and having matured all our plans, rose early in the morning. We then took our stations, Paulding, Williams and Van Wart watching the Post Road, and the other four ambushing the refugees' path. It was about ten or eleven when Major André was taken, and his captors soon joined us at our station, when we all proceeded with the prisoner to Jacob Romer's, where we partook of some refreshments, André refusing to eat or drink anything; seemed unwilling to talk and desirous of being alone. Before starting on the expedition, we had applied to Captain Baker and our other commanding officers, and they had full knowledge of and approved our enterprise."

*F. Statement of Mrs. Charity Tompkins.*

"Mrs. Charity Tompkins, in an interview, date of August 31, 1847, gives the following sketch of the Romer family, early of this vicinity:

"Old Mr. (Jacob) and Mrs. Romer, parents of John Romer, came from the same parish, or village, in Switzerland, and had become attached to each other in early childhood; she the daughter of a farmer, and he the son of a tailor and a tailor himself. When grown up they wanted to marry, but her parents refused consent. They then determined to seek their fortunes in America, and left their native place together. When they arrived at New York she had money to pay her passage, while his means were exhausted. He was about to sell himself for a time, as the custom was then, when she said: 'You can earn money to purchase my freedom sooner than I can yours. Let me be sold, then you can work at your trade until you can earn enough to buy my time, when we will marry.' He consented to this arrangement and paid for his passage with her money, while she was sold. When he had earned sufficient, her freedom was bought, and so they were married, August 11, 1754. Her name was Frena Haarlager.

This Jacob had five sons, John, James, Jacob, Joseph and Hendrick, all of whom were Revolutionary soldiers. The latter, born 1755, afterwards removed to Cortland town, where he died 1808, leaving descendants by two marriages. John married Leah, the only daughter of Cornelius Van Tassel. James Romer was one of those who made up the party at the time of capture of André, but the following account is given by John, who was afterwards known as Captain John Romer: "The captors of André stopped at my father's in the morning before day and took breakfast, and took a dinner, prepared for them by my mother, in a pewter basin and basket. They stopped a little upon the hillock east of the road and north of the brook, afterwards crossed the road and when they captured André were south of the brook. After the capture they forgot all about the basket and basin, but on arriving at our house described where they had left them and I was sent for and found them. Paulding returned from the capture in advance of the rest. My

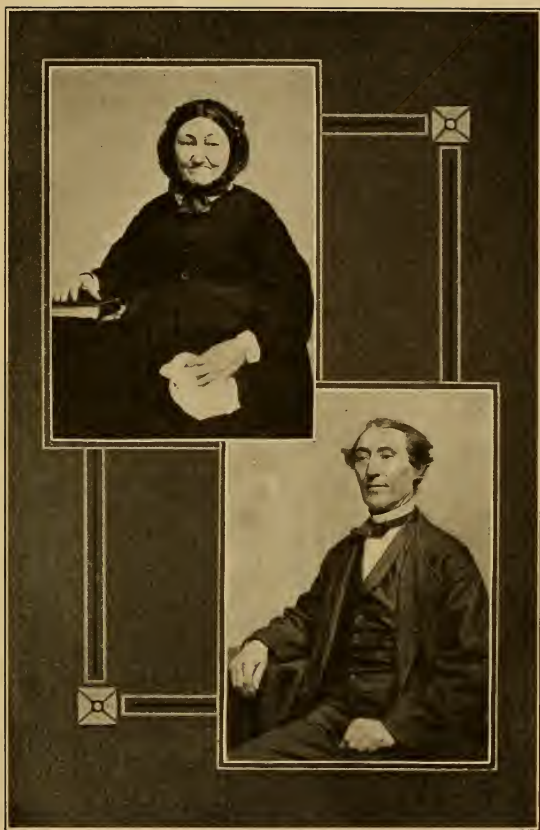
mother was a very warm Whig. Paulding said to her, "Aunt Fanny, take care what you say now; I believe we've got a British officer with us." My father's house was about a quarter of a mile from the White Plains and Tarrytown Road, and a quarter from the Post Road. The brook where André was taken was called Clark's Kill. After his capture he was taken into the thicket on the east side of the road and to the old white-wood tree, about 150 yards from the brook near which he was taken, and it was under that tree that they searched him and discovered his papers."

## DESCENDANTS OF CAPTAIN JOHN ROMER.

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Of the thirteen children of John and Leah Romer, we have but meager records, save in one or two instances. Isaac died when six years old; Cornelius died at the age of thirty-six; Edward died when quite young; Hiram married and settled in central New York, near Jamesville, south of Syracuse; John married and made his home in Tarrytown until his wife Cecelia died, afterwards he made his home in New York. Ardenas married Deborah Ann Free, and had four children—Silas, Isaac, Rachel and Elizabeth, all of whom are now deceased. A daughter of Rachel, Myra S. Walker, now lives at Moline, Ill.

Alexander married first Henrietta D. Crane in New York, and later removed to Buffalo, N. Y. Of this marriage five children were born—Ann, Isaac, Livingston, Washington and Martin. The three last named served with credit in the Civil War. Washington was wounded at Chattanooga. He married, had one daughter, and died at Newark, N. J. Livingston died of wounds received in Virginia. Martin married, had one daughter, and died at Hurley, N. Y. Ann married Henry Jeudevine, and settled in Detroit. Isaac married Wealthy A. Burt and settled in Buffalo, where he died in 1907, leaving a son and one daughter, Sarah B. Romer. In 1845, Alexander Romer married his second wife, Caroline C. Lockwood, daughter of Lieutenant Luther Lockwood, a soldier of the War of 1812, and Minerva Hawley, his wife. There were four children of this marriage—James Fuller and Emma Palmer, both of whom



CHRISTENA GRAHAM, DAUGHTER, AND JOHN ROMER, SON, OF  
CAPTAIN JOHN ROMER





ALEXANDER ROMER AND CAROLINE C. LOCKWOOD, HIS WIFE



CORNELIUS ROMER

DIED

July 9, 1893

AGED

36 Years 6 Months.

ALSO

CATHARINE LENT.

WIFE OF

CORNELIUS ROMER.

DIED

April 3, 1868,

AGED

68 Years 4 Months & 28 Days.



JOHN LOCKWOOD ROMER



KATHERINE TAYLOR ROMER



died in infancy, and John Lockwood Romer, now, (1916), living in Buffalo, and Carrie, who was born in the old Van Tassel-Romer house in the Sawmill River Valley. She married Millard F. Windsor, of Buffalo, and died July 3, 1906, leaving two daughters, Mildred Windsor and Ellen Josephine Windsor. John Lockwood Romer married Katherine M. Taylor, of Cleveland, Ohio. Of this marriage, three children were born—Ray Taylor Romer; Florence Romer, who married Reverend Charles C. Albertson, D. D., now residing in Brooklyn, and has one daughter, Katherine R. Albertson; and Mabel Romer, who married Harold H. Baker, M. D., now residing in Rochester, N. Y., and has a son, John Simeon Baker.

Alexander Romer was born in the Romer-Van Tassel homestead in the Sawmill River Valley, October 1, 1801, and here his boyhood was spent. From youth to early manhood he lived in the city of New York. He moved to Buffalo in September, 1830, where he carried on business as a carpenter and builder. In 1850 he returned to his boyhood home for a brief period, but in 1858 again took up his residence in Buffalo, removing to Lancaster, in Erie County, in 1862, where he resided for twenty-four years. During the administration of Mr. Lincoln, he was appointed and served as postmaster at Town Line Village. He died in Buffalo on July 3, 1888, aged eighty-seven years. On the occasion of his funeral, Reverend L. D. Ferguson, D. D., delivered the following address:

"The illusiveness of our earthly life has been witnessed and lamented by the greater number of our species, as one by one they have passed into the cloud-land—that realm of mystery and silence. They have not reached the objects of their ambition; they have not realized their anticipations; have not filled up their purposes; have not enjoyed the Canaan of their hopes. Disappointment and dissatisfaction have seemed to them the reward of their sacrifices and exertions.

"So we must confess it has been with us who are yet among the living. We have found life unlike what we wished and dreamed. Our ideal has not been reached; our over-sanguine hopes have not been fulfilled; but our allotment has been chiefly a recurrence of fluctuating feelings. Our high resolves, our boundless plans, our

strong determinations, have been clouded by partial failure, until at length we have yielded to repinings or despair; saying at times with the Patriarch Jacob, 'Few and evil have been the days of my pilgrimage.'

"And yet, while we do not win what we expected, we get something which in other time may be of great value. We get patience in adversity; we get fortitude to bear our pain and disappointments; we get firmness and constancy; we get persistency even in reverses; we get *character*, which is the *substance* of heaven itself, without which spiritual realities cannot be comprehended.

"But through the changes and fleeting experiences of life our departed brother has already passed. He has had his share in its enterprises, in its successes and reverses, until the rolling wave has died upon the shore, and the once heaving breast is still.

"As a rare exception to the common frame of men, his spirit was that of cheer and hope unto the last. Hope was the light which shed its influence upon his faculties and life. This may have arisen partly from the native bias of his mind; partly from his firm trust in the final well-being of our redeemed race; or further, from the fortunate blessings he experienced in the kindness and helpful power of his dutiful children.

"His always seemed to me a blameless life. His heart seemed full of kindness; ready to pity weakness; to forgive injuries; to sympathize with justice; while he was modest, generous, unaffected; a friendly friend, and not the simulator of qualities which he did not really possess.

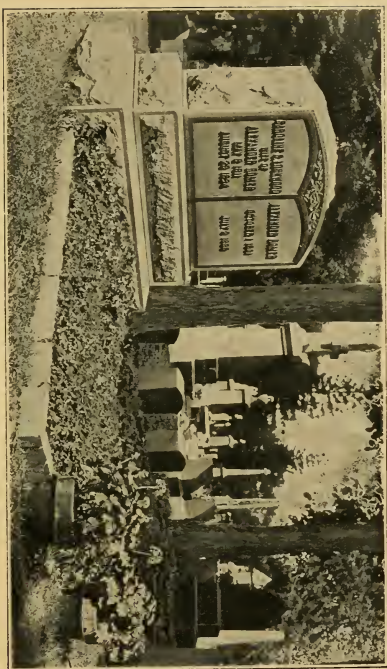
"Such in brief, is the aspect in which the character of this venerable man presented itself to an observer; one whom I have valued as a steadfast friend.

"Let us part with him then, with the trust that when the final moment came, his spirit of hope and cheer and confidence met with response from the other shore, and with a spirit of welcome which assured inheritance with those who, through faith and patience, 'inherit the promises,'—an inheritance not gained by purchase, but is alone the gift of God.

"And now, you, whose hearts beat into each other, whose spirits feel in common the wound that death has made, be ye comforted in this, that your care and kindness have made a father's later years less heavy than the common lot, and death less dreaded; and may you each, and may you all, when care and dying are among the things that are no more, meet whispers from the open doors of paradise, saying, 'Peace, grace and mercy from God our Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ.'"

Caroline C. Romer, widow of Alexander Romer, died August 28, 1894. Reverend Willis P. Odell, D. D., officiated at her funeral. The following notice appeared in the *Buffalo Christian Advocate*:

"On Tuesday evening, August 28, Mrs. Caroline C. Romer, of Buffalo, in her eighty-fourth year, entered into rest. For several



FOREST LAWN CEMETERY



CARRIE ROMER WINDSOR



years she had been a great sufferer, but bore all with true Christian patience and fortitude. She was a woman of strong character, with a marked and rich experience in the divine life. During her protracted illness her faith and hope were triumphant over her intense sufferings, so that she exemplified in a high degree 'the patience of the saints.' The deceased was a member of Delaware Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church, and mother of John L. Romer, Esq., of this city."

Carrie Romer Windsor died in Buffalo July 3, 1906. Reverend Charles C. Albertson, D. D., officiated at her funeral. The following notices appeared in the *Buffalo Commercial*:

"The death of Mrs. Millard F. Windsor, which occurred on Tuesday of this week, was a painful surprise to a great number of friends. Her illness was of short duration, the first intimation of it, except to a few, being the announcement of her death. Mrs. Windsor had been a resident of Buffalo for thirty years and was highly esteemed in social, philanthropic and church circles as a woman of many virtues. Her sunny disposition endeared her to all and her effectiveness in good works made her a valuable associate in benevolent enterprises. She is survived by her husband and two young daughters, and by her brother, John L. Romer."

"The funeral of Mrs. Millard F. Windsor, who died on Tuesday, was held from the family residence, 703 West Ferry Street, at three o'clock this afternoon. Reverend C. C. Albertson, D.D., former pastor of the Delaware Avenue Methodist Church, assisted by Reverend R. F. Hurlburt, officiated. The honorary bearers were James Fenton, Robert Keating, John W. Robinson, Hiram Watson, Hiram Waltz, A. G. Sherman, A. H. Dickinson and John Humble. The active bearers were T. J. Overturf, George M. Ramsdell, William Lansill, William D. Cushman, Robert W. Murphy, L. A. Mattice, Otto G. Spann and Robert W. Gallagher. Interment was in Forest Lawn."

Isaac J. Romer, oldest son of Alexander Romer, died in Buffalo, May 1, 1907. The following notice appeared in a Buffalo daily paper:

"Isaac J. Romer, who had been a resident of this city for over seventy-six years, coming to Buffalo in its infancy and growing up with its development, passed away yesterday at his home, 380 Rhode Island Street, after an illness of a week. Mr. Romer was born in New York City seventy-eight years ago, the son of the late Alexander Romer. With his parents he came to Buffalo in 1830 by way of the canal. He received his education in this city, and then embarked in the lumber and contracting business, which he continued practically all his life. He was in partnership with William Pooley for a number of years, but had mostly engaged in business for himself.

"Mr. Romer is survived by one son and one daughter. He was a brother of John L. Romer. His wife, Wealthy A. Burt, died some four years ago. The funeral will be held from the family home tomorrow afternoon."

Of the daughters of Captain John Romer and his wife Leah, Nancy married Isaac Burr, of Greenburg; Christina married William Graham; Elizabeth married — Barker; Phoebe married first, Charles A. Righter, of Powerville, N. J. A son, Charles A. Righter, Jr., was born, who married Winifred Thomas. To them was born a son, Lincoln Righter, now of Boston, Mass., and a daughter, Ethel Field Righter. Lincoln Righter married Clara H. Napier, to whom was born a daughter Constance, who married Robert D. Morse. Ethel Field Righter married Raymond Huntington Woodman, now residing in Brooklyn, N. Y., and to them were born two daughters—Winifred Woodman and Jocelyn Woodman.

Phoebe Romer Righter married for her second husband Edward S. Pepper, of Tarrytown, and of this marriage was born a daughter, Elvie, who married Clifton H. Markoe, but did not long survive her marriage.

Angeline Romer married John C. A. Hamilton, a grandson of General Alexander Hamilton, of Revolutionary fame, September 20, 1838, and died December 4, 1889. Of this marriage two sons were born—Edgar A. Hamilton and John C. L. Hamilton, both of whom are living, Edgar being pastor of a Presbyterian Church in Sussex, N. J., and John C. L., living in retirement at Elmsford, N. Y.

Both Edgar and John served with distinction throughout the Civil War.

Edgar married first, Martha Ecob, and second, Mrs. Carrie Rogers Tolfree. His oldest son, Edgar Laurens Hamilton, is a Baptist clergyman now living at Hudson, Mass., who has four children—Harold R., Alexander, Philip

Schuyler and Eveline Hope. Edgar's second son, James Arthur Hamilton, has two children, Margaret Elizabeth and Martha Louise. He resides in Gainesville, Georgia. Edgar's first daughter, Grace Holmes Hamilton, is a member of the Bible Institute in New York, and his second daughter, Eleanor Ecob, is now principal in charge of Miami Valley Hospital, at Dayton, Ohio.

John C. L. Hamilton married Sarah F. Pugh, of Washington, N. C. To them four sons and one daughter were born. Frank is the general superintendent of the Department of Horticulture in New York City parks; Mary Schuyler Hamilton is engaged in educational work; Philip L. is foreman for Pierson & Company; Joseph T. is an engineer; and John C. resides with his parents.

## WHERE JOHN ANDRÉ WAS CAPTURED.

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G. A. R. Flag-Raising at Elmsford Schoolhouse Recalls Revolutionary Days in Hudson Valley—Some New History.

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Eighteen miles from New York, in one of the loveliest portions of the beautiful valley of the Hudson, lies the village of Elmsford, little known to fame, but surrounded by historic sites and patriotic traditions second to those of no other small town in the State. Hither, a fortnight ago (September 28), came the members of Lafayette Post, No. 140, G. A. R., to partake of the hospitality of the good people of Elmsford, and to present to them an American flag to float over their new schoolhouse.

It was a great festal day for Elmsford and vicinity. The people came for many miles around, and there were many speeches and songs and wild cheers when Old Glory crept up the flagstaff. There was a genuine Rhode Island clam-bake, too, and good cheer and good-fellowship on every hand.

Next to the patriotism of the people, what interested the veterans most was the Revolutionary history and traditions of Elmsford. And in these matters they could not have had a better tutor than their old comrade-in-arms, Col. J. C. L. Hamilton, great-grandson of that most illustrious son of New York, the great soldier and statesman who sleeps in Trinity churchyard.

The Colonel lives at Elmsford, and is a member of Lafayette Post. His grandfathers were John Romer and Cornelius Van Tassel, and his great-grandfather was Alexander Hamilton, all of whom were in the battle of White Plains in 1776. Colonel Hamilton was a soldier in the late Civil War, serving in the Fifth New York Volunteers and the Third New York Artillery.

Under the old trees, in the shadow of many an historic structure, that fair autumn afternoon, chatting quietly with his comrades, Colonel Hamilton gave old-time stories, reminiscences and traditions, many of which are published for the first time in today's *Mail and Express*. Here are some of the things he said and showed to them:

#### HISTORIC GROUND.

The present village of Elmsford was named Storm's Bridge from 1704 to 1785; Greenburg, from 1785 to 1845; Hall's Corners, from 1845 to 1865, and took its present name in 1865. It is situated midway between White Plains and Tarrytown, and occupies one of the most attractive and picturesque situations in the famous riparian valley. It is noted in history as having been settled in Colonial times by the Ackers, Storms, Van Tassels, Boyces, Van Warts, Romers and others whose descendants did yeoman service in the days of '76. Everybody, it seems, was expected to do military service in those days, all of 16 years and upward being enrolled into companies which elected officers who were in 1775 commissioned by Congress. Upon the commission given to Captain Abraham Storm and Lieutenant Cornelius Van Tassel the name of Tarrytown appears for the first time that it can be found on any record yet discovered. The position of the company commanded by these two sturdy men was at Elmsford, and within the northern edge of the Neutral Ground, and it was stubbornly defended for eight long years by patriots whose names the pen of history has somewhat neglected.

About two miles south of Elmsford General Washington selected the camp for the French and American armies in 1781. His headquarters, which were in the house of Lieut. Appleton, of Captain Storm's company, have long since disappeared, but Count Rochambeau's headquarters—a few minutes' walk from the spot—still remain and are occupied. It is a unique dwelling, as may be readily imagined, as it was built in 1730 by John Tompkins, who seven years later paid twelve bushels of wheat for rent of the farm. This transaction appears by a receipt still in existence, though stained and yellow with its age of 158 years. It reads as follows:

"Rec'd this 3d Feb., 1737, of John Tompkins twelve bushells of Wheat it being for a Year's Rent due to me for the farm he lives on.  
FRED PHILIPS."

#### SOME OLD PAPERS.

Captain Abraham Storm occupied several hundred acres of land in this neighborhood, and in 1785 purchased from the Commissioners of Forfeitures the farm which now comprises the village of Elmsford. This pious man made a will in 1790, bequeathing all his real estate to his wife, directing that his gun be given to his nephew, Nicholas, and that his slave, Pete, be sold, and the sum of twenty-five pounds out of the proceeds be given to the Dutch Church. This church was in Sleepy Hollow.

The children of the new and commodious schoolhouse of brick where Lafayette Post has placed the flag, find it hard to realize the conditions pertaining to education in the days of their grandparents, when was built the little hut standing and only recently abandoned. It was erected at the foot of the graveyard, because the ground was too wet and damp for burial purposes, but good enough for living children. It was only seventeen by twenty-four feet in size, and, of course, only one story high. Nobody thought of more than one story for a schoolhouse in those days, and

yet it was erected under a State law—the first general school act passed under Governor Clinton's administration in 1790-91—and the playground was but 25 x 50 feet in that tract where farms rented for a few dollars a year. In witness of this last fact another rent receipt of Philips is shown, which is upon a printed form of clear, well-formed type. It is a curiosity, because it is in type and shows that the land-lord must have been a man of great wealth to indulge in such a piece of extravagance.

"Received this, 22th day of December, 1767, from Dirck Van Tassel, one of the Tenants on the Manor of Philipsburgh, the Sum of six pounds, two shillings, sixpence for one Year's Rent, due the Day and Date above; by me.  
FRED PHILIPS."

#### AN ODD SCHOOLMASTER.

It appears that schoolteachers were not very well qualified even as recently as seventy-five years ago, though they were apparently shrewd enough to accumulate wealth. Hall's Corners was named by one J. H. Hall, a teacher in the little schoolhouse, afterward a wealthy land owner. A curious document is one from the pen of this erudite pedagogue who sent notices around by hand (not enveloped) written upon strips of paper about two inches wide and fifteen long. Here is one, addressed to Mr. John Romer, Greenburgh. The spelling seems to be as original as the plan of raising support for the school:

"Sir—The School bein' in want of wood I am under the necessity of Sending this Billet to you for your Quota of money to by Wood for Fuel it being by order of the Trustees and to the Sum of one Shilling for Each and Every Such pupil Per piece and pleas to Send the Money as soon as you Can and Oblige your Humble Servant.  
J. H. HALL.

"Greenburgh District No. 6 November 22nd 1816."

It was customary, it seems, to procure this wood in long trunks, which was delivered to the school in this form, and the children had to cut it in lengths of about three feet

to be burned in the old box stoves, a system of physical culture no longer in vogue.

One feels like removing one's hat as he wanders through the graveyard where rest the heroes who founded American liberty. The congregation of the Presbyterian church—the first church erected in the town—was organized in 1788 and the church was built just 100 years ago. Isaac Van Wart, one of the captors of Major André, whose monument is the most conspicuous, was an elder of the church. Beside the grave of Van Wart is that of Solomon Utter (the grandfather of Dr. Francis Utter of Lafayette Post), who built the gallows upon which André was hung.

Another patriot, Abraham Martling, lies under a tombstone bearing an inscription telling of the expedition he led in 1777 from Wolfert's Roost down to New York, when he burned Governor Delancey's house, on Bloomingdale road, in retaliation for the burning by the British of the house of his friend and neighbor, Lieutenant Van Tassel. He was at the surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown.

Captain John Romer's grave is there, too. He died in 1855, and many yet living have heard him tell of how he felt as a boy when, amid the excitement of the presence of a British prisoner in his mother's house, he was obliged to go a long way up the road to fetch the pewter basin needed for breakfast, the prisoner being one John André, captured with Benedict Arnold's papers in his pocket by three sturdy yeomen that morning.

But of all the odd epitaphs to be seen, the oddest is one in the Sleepy Hollow churchyard, on the tombstone of Capt. John Buckhout, who died at the close of the Revolution, 103 years old. The inscription says that he left behind him 240 children and grandchildren.—*New York Mail and Express*, October 12, 1895.





GREENBURGH CHURCHYARD



## A VISIT TO ELMSFORD.

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BY SARAH COMSTOCK.

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To be sure, the old Sawmill River Road, and the old Four Corners of Westchester county, and the spot where the British guide hid in the currant bushes, and all the rest of the Elmsford traditions, might be there without Colonel Hamilton. But it's hard to believe it. Colonel Hamilton is so much a part of the place, its traditions live so in him, that you feel as if they would melt away if he were not there to hold them. When the great-grandson of Alexander Hamilton and of Cornelius Van Tassel points with his cane and says: "That's where the currant bushes stood!" you're bound to see those currant bushes.

There are several ways to reach this nest of Revolutionary lore. The New York Central & Hudson River Railroad will carry you directly to Elmsford for half a dollar. You can trolley the entire way, going to Mount Vernon and from Mount Vernon to White Plains, then taking the Tarrytown trolley and getting off at Elmsford. This is the inexpensive route.

But for those of you who are brave enough to don the broad-soled, low-heeled boot of the road, and to set out for a good summer day's tramp, here's a suggestion that is worth heeding.

Start early and go directly to Yonkers, either by train or by the Broadway subway. Starting out parallel with Nepperhan Avenue, north of the Yonkers Station, you will find the old Sawmill River Road itself. From here it runs north, pursuing the course of the stream for which it was named long ago, in the days when the saw mills at Yonkers were famed through all the country around.

Here your tramp begins. It is interesting to look at the rapid stream and think of the wonderful changes it has seen—from the days when a Mohican village stood at its mouth, when the inhabitants of that village called it *Nappechemak*, since corrupted into *Nepperhan*. Henry Hudson found this village; Dutch traders visited it in his wake, and the Dutch West India Company made settlements here as early as 1639. Van der Donck, a burgher of Manhattan, acquired lands here; the town grew rapidly, and the busy little *Nepperhan* was put into harness and made to run a sawmill. Other mills followed, and the stream found this world a very toilsome place. Bulky buildings now hem it in, and it is not until you trace it into the open country further north that you will find it as the Mohicans once knew it, free and sparkling, open to the sun and winds of the summer world.

The distance from Yonkers to the old Four Corners is, roughly, ten miles. If you are a good walker every step of the way will repay you.

As you tramp on to the north you can remember that the roads thereabouts were all much used during that part of the Revolution which was enacted in Westchester county. Washington and his officers knew them well, and there are carefully preserved maps which were used to trace them for military manœuvres of that period.

Ardsey is reached; between this and Elmsford stands the historic house known as *Rochambeau's* headquarters, now the *Odell House*. At last you enter quiet little Elmsford, whose interests center so largely in the past—and it was

in his own home there that we found Colonel John C. L. Hamilton.

A Civil War veteran himself, his great-grandfathers on two sides were well known to Revolutionary fame. His house is a treasure-trove of war records, portraits, rare old furniture, and ornaments. The andirons brought from the old Dutch home of the Van Tassels adorn his fireplace, and the pewter basin which has figured in many tales of the capture of André stands on his mantel. Some say the young British officer ate his bread and milk from it on the day of his capture; Colonel Hamilton's opinion, however, is that he had little appetite for bread and milk.

Here, but a few miles from Sleepy Hollow, from the bridge where the Headless Horseman rode, from the old mill of Irving lore, from the graves of the Van Tassels, his forebears, this genial veteran lives in the atmosphere of the history that he loves. It's a lucky traveler who wins his interest and hears the stories of the old town as he tells them.

"You see, it was in the old house that used to stand down the road below here that my great-grandfather, Cornelius Van Tassel, lived when he was captured by the British and taken to New York to the old sugar house prison," he told us. We were all out on the sunny veranda at the rear of the house, and as the Colonel began, the family cat drew up and solemnly seated herself, apparently to listen to a favorite tale. "The British and Tories had been making plenty of trouble hereabout, and it struck their fancy to burn my great-grandfather's dwelling, which was a very good one for that period. But although that building perished there was soon a new one to replace it on the same site, and you'll find the second, now ancient enough, standing there today."

If you will stroll down there you will see the house in good preservation, an excellent example of the old architecture of the Sleepy Hollow School.

After the original house had been burned and Van Tassel carried off prisoner, his wife hid in an earth cellar. It was a

few nights after the disaster that she heard the sound of hoofs and thought the British were coming again. But suddenly she recognized a familiar whinny, and peered out to see, silhouetted in the moonlight, her pet horse, which had been driven off by the enemy and was now returning to his beloved home. It is said that she ran out from the cellar, threw her arms around his neck, and kissed him. We can realize that the comradeship of a companion like this must have been a great comfort in her loneliness; for eleven months and eleven days Van Tassell remained a prisoner.

"When you cross the little bridge where the river intersects the main street you can think of it as the spot where old Storm's Bridge used to stand," the Colonel told us. "The old one gave out, but this was built in exactly the same place."

And then he went on to tell us about old Storm's Bridge. Washington, coming down the Sawmill road with Rochambeau, was met at this bridge by his chief quartermaster. "You cannot go further," was the message which halted him. "The British are camping just below." This was a surprise to the chief, who had laid plans that did not at all harmonize with a British camp in the neighborhood, and thereupon he and Rochambeau rode on to the "Featherstone House" to hold conference. This house was much used by Washington when in this neighborhood, and you can visit it today and see it just as it was in the seventeen hundreds.

Up the main street a block or so you will find a road leading off opposite the Catholic Church. A short walk toward the southeast on this road brings you to the building. It is known as the Featherstone House to all the dwellers thereabout, and by this, its modern name, is easily located.

The present owner met us and showed us about cordially. We admired the preservation of the building.

"Well, I'm sorry we haven't rebuilt it," he responded apologetically. "We did want to run up a mansard, and make a new porch, and change the old place and bring it up to date, but we haven't got around to it yet."

We implored that he might never "get around to it." The joy of finding any Revolutionary building intact, roof, windows, doors, and all, is nothing less than a solemn joy. It may be unkind to wish Mr. Featherstone a lack of prosperity, but if riches would sprout a mansard and a new porch on that delightful little weather-beaten dwelling, who can wish him the riches?

"Is the well very old?" we asked him.

"You can't call it new," he replied, "since Jacob Iselin, the one that used to come over this way from New Rochelle—he's dead, you know—said he'd ridden by this place for fifty years and he's never passed without stoppin' for a drink from it."

Perhaps Washington and Rochambeau drank from it—who knows?

"You can't see the currant bushes today, but you can see where they stood when Jim Husted hid in them," Colonel Hamilton had told us with a chuckle. "That was in 1777. Our men had been having a little skirmish with the British near here, and we had done for them—took Barrymore and all his men, or so the Americans thought. It wasn't till afterward that it was discovered that Jim Husted, the British guide, had escaped, and had saved himself by hiding in the currant bushes of what is now the Featherstone House."

Now to go back to the conference of Washington and Rochambeau in that house.

"After they had talked matters over," Colonel Hamilton told us, "they decided that the French had better not proceed as they had been ordered to do, so Washington ordered the quartermaster to ride back to Storm's Bridge and stop them, and order them to camp here over night. But when the offi-



cer got back to this place he found that they had gone on up the road—maybe they hadn't understood the command in English—and they had marched on in such heat as they'd never seen before, and four hundred of them were overcome. So they were taken on to the French hospital, and if you go on to White Plains you can see that building to-day, at the second passing of the trolley cars, a bit to the south of the track."

Directly on the main street we found the Ledger House that the Colonel had told us about. "It's a good deal changed since the days when Abraham Storm built it," he had said. "Storm himself wouldn't know it now. He was a captain and a mighty active man from the beginning of the war. He put up that house, but the British set fire to it, and only a part of the building was saved. What was saved is still standing, though, and you're looking at it when you look at that hotel."

This was the Storm for whom the bridge was named.

We turned south near the railroad, and a minute's walk brought us to the old church facing close upon the road. Next to it stands the pastor's house. The very charming young lady who resides there was good enough to take out a marvelous key and show us into the church. This key is the original one, and it creaks in its huge old lock with a rheumatic sound.

In 1788 the church is supposed to have been built, although the loss of its records leaves a cloud hanging about its earliest history. Within and without it is typical of the severity of that period. American settlers built their houses of worship for worship alone then, having no money for display. The old-time gallery is there and the bare walls without adornment of magnificent windows or tablets. The church-going of the seventeen hundreds was severe as well as the preaching. The Rev. Thomas Smith traveled all the way from Sleepy Hollow to hold regular services here and



the farmers flocked to pray. Thus this parish was linked with the famous Dutch church which calls up all the Irving tradition by its mere name.

Many an old record may be read on the crumbling stones. Here are seen such familiar names as "Van Tassel," "Romer," and "Van Wart." Among the newer stones is a monument erected to the memory of Isaac Van Wart by the County of Westchester. The inscription reminds you that in September, 1780, "Isaac Van Wart, accompanied by John Paulding and David Williams, all farmers in the county, intercepted Major André on his return from the American lines in the character of a spy, and, notwithstanding the large bribes offered them for his release, nobly disdaining to sacrifice their country for gold, secured and carried him to the commander of the district, whereby the dangerous and traitorous conspiracy of Arnold was brought to light, the insidious designs of the enemy baffled, the American army saved, and our beloved country now free and independent, rescued from most imminent peril."

Here, then, sleeps the captor of André, honored by his countrymen, while across the river stands a monument which generously honors the spy himself, erected by the same people who captured and hanged him. It is a significant fact, in token of "those better feelings which have since united the two nations."

Fenced in with Van Wart's fine monument is a quaint little slab snuggling at its base. Here, beside her husband, lies Rachel Storm Van Wart.

Greenburgh and Hall's Corners are the names by which the modern Elmsford was known in earlier years. On one of the old maps the spot appears to be indicated by the mark "Tavern," and a mile or two to the north we find another "Tavern." The latter was probably at the Four Corners, the place where there were warlike noises in 1776 and thereafter for some years.

The Four Corners lay on the road that led from Sleepy Hollow to what is now North White Plains, at the point where this road intersected the Sawmill Road. At present there is not a landmark left on the place except an old school house on the site where Paulding went to school in the original building. The Paulding farm adjoined it.

But a century and more ago! It was a different spot then. At the Four Corners stood the home of Joseph Youngs, and the American troops found this dwelling a most convenient place to make headquarters. Accordingly they came there and remained there, the commanders living in the house, and the soldiers occupying the many outbuildings as barracks. Military stores and provisions were hoarded there.

From August of '76 to February of '80 the Americans were quartered here much of the time, and many were the skirmishes in and about the old Four Corners. At one time Capt. Williams of the American army, with his forty men, was attacked by British refugees. The Captain, a party of soldiers, and Joseph Youngs himself, were taken prisoners. For a year poor Youngs was confined in New York city, while his barn up at Four Corners was burned by the British, and a large stock of cattle stolen. Later a petition of Martha, Samuel, and Thomas Youngs, recorded the fact that in February, 1780, there was an attack on the post by 1,000 British troops and refugees, and "all the clothing, bedding, and furniture of said Joseph Youngs destroyed at that inclement season of the year."

But of all the delightful legends with which this region abounds none is so delightful as that of Cooper and his "Westchester Spy." Here the tale was laid, the site of the hamlet of the Four Corners was the stage of that drama. According to Bolton, a little west of the Van Wart residence stood the "Hotel Flanagan, a place of refuge for man and beast." The sign "Elizabeth Flanagan, her Hotel," hung before it. Betty Flanagan lived after her soldier

husband had fallen for his country, by driving a cart to various military encampments. At this time the Virginia Cavalry happened to be making the Four Corners their headquarters, so Betty had brought her cart hither, and here, Bolton tells us, she was stationed when the lawless Skinners dragged in the pedlar spy.

But the most interesting item recorded in the history of Betty is that "she is said to have invented the well-known beverage vulgarly called 'cocktail.'" If this be true, no wonder Elizabeth Flanagan and her hotel live in history. —*New York Times*, July 19, 1914.

## A BIT OF THE NEUTRAL GROUND.

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By B. H. DEAN.

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"Heh, boy!" I cried, from my perch on a pile of railroad ties; "Hey, there! Where's 'Gallows Elm'?"

The country stillness was so intense that the call carried well, and the youthful fisherman, bare-footed and in picturesque attire, reluctantly pulled his line from the little river and ran toward me.

"What's that," he called, "Wh'd you say?"

"Gallows Elm," I replied—"don't you know about the wonderful old elm?" and then, because he was lost in bewilderment, I added—"You see, boy, I've found the old church and the monument, but now I'm after that particular old elm tree that has such a reputation—and aren't there any other historic old places around here?"

The boy straightened himself and looked me squarely in the eyes: "No," he said, "we hain't got none now—but we're goin' to build some."

"Good for you and for your principles, old man," I answered, but, as I 'viewed the landscape o'er,' a fervent hope entered my heart that the demon of progress would never get started on this quiet, sleepy old place.

Just a tiny hamlet set down in the green valley; the shining track of the railroad crossed by the trolley line, that followed the highway, over the hills forming a center about

which clustered a few modest homes, the general store, the hotel, the postoffice, and the picturesque little station. Very peaceful and remote from the city it seemed; a place in which to rest and let thoughts wander on pleasant themes. Even a team of oxen in a nearby meadow took life with placid unconcern, lazily following their master's lead, and pulling the harrow through the soft mold.

Such is Elmsford now, but places sometimes resemble people, in that the quiet ones have known a turbulent past.

Before the morning was over I found a man who had been born and raised in the Nepperhan Valley and who, moreover, was a great-grandson of Alexander Hamilton.

As I sat on the doorstep of his home and heard him talk, there came insistently to mind portions of Spartacus' speech to the gladiators: "An old man was telling of Marathon and Leuctra and how, in ancient times, a little band of Spartans, in a defile of the mountains, had withstood a whole army," for round about these parts the great spirit of the Revolution flourished in mighty strength.

"Gallows Elm," he said, "that's all nonsense! You see, a good many years ago this vicinity was called Greenburg, but one day our neighbors to the south decided to have a little town of their own and they called it Ashford, although there wasn't an ash tree in the place. Well, three or four of us prominent citizens were talking it over up at the corner grocery, and we made up our minds we would be known as "Elmsford," in honor of the great tree that stood at the crossroads. The elm was big and strong then, with wide-spreading branches, but the lightning found it a year or two ago, and I suppose it is bound to go the way of all things earthly.

"There is no Ashford now, though, for after Cyrus W. Field, of ocean cable fame, established his country seat there, and named it 'Ardsley Court,' the town was rechristened 'Ardsley' in compliment to him."

He told me about the little old church, whose earliest records have gone astray, but which dates back apparently to 1788; how he could remember attending service there when they had but one hymnal, and then, after a while, a very wealthy man came from over the sea and, becoming a member of the congregation, helped them financially, and also placed two extra books in his pew.

We went into the little parlor where the air was heavy with the odor of lilacs, and there were many books and pictures, and strange old documents framed for security; and he showed me parts of a Revolutionary uniform which had belonged to his grandfather; the old flintlock musket, heavy to raise to the shoulder, and the wooden canteen, clumsy and dust-covered, but eloquent of other days. And there was an old pewter basin, somewhat battered and time-worn, but a highly prized relic, for it was in this that the captors of Major André had carried their lunch that fateful day which, luckily for us Americans, terminated as it did. I touched the dish reverently, for with me tangible things have a great significance. When I stood in the little churchyard reading the inscription on the monument erected in honor of Isaac Van Wart, one of the men who would not barter country for gold, it had all seemed very distant, but this common household article added the realism which had been lacking.

And as I was about to leave he invited me into the garden, beautiful with blossoming plants and fragrant with the "minty" perfume peculiar to the country. One great bush of bridal-wreath, in its luxuriance, reached out over the grassy walk until its soft blossoms brushed against my face, and a few misty flowers fluttered over the lawn and were caught by the heavier breeze and carried down the road and far away.

And my host pointed to two companion trees, standing in an open space, on a distant hilltop; one dark like an evergreen, and the other fresh like a young maple. "Sentinel

Rock is yonder," he said, "the rendezvous of the soldiers, and from it could be had a view of the camps of Washington and Rochambeau. It was up there young Van Tassel went that bleak night in November, when the British burned his father's house, and he escaped by strategy, covering himself with a blanket and carrying out a piece of furniture alongside of the marauders. You'll find the old house down the road about a mile. It's been rebuilt and someone is living there."

From small beginnings there sometimes come such large returns. I started out that morning to find a tree, attracted by its fanciful name. I found instead a pastoral region peopled in imagination by such an army of ghosts that the days of '76 were as yesterday; and to my mind was brought more forcibly the meaning of the Revolution, and an appreciation of the fearful odds against which those men, our forefathers, wrought. In and about the Neutral Ground stalks many a battle-scarred wraith, but the unseeing, careless eye passes them by, catching only at meaningless baubles that glitter in the sunlight.—New York Central Lines, *Four Track News*, November, 1904.

## HEROES OF THE NEUTRAL GROUND.

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BY JOHN P. RITTER.

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The valley of the Neperan, or Sawmill river, in Westchester county, N. Y., is situated in the very heart of the Neutral Ground of the Revolution—that debatable territory lying between the rival armies, when the British were in possession of Manhattan Island and the Americans occupied the Highlands of the Hudson.

A railroad winds through it now, and it is fast losing the pastoral charm for which it was once famous. Fields that formerly waved with grain are dotted with cheap wooden villages; pastures where sleek cattle browsed are intersected with prospective streets, and steam factories occupy the old mill sites where creaking water-wheels once lazily turned. Landmarks invested with historic and traditionary interest are rapidly disappearing; everywhere the romantic is being crowded out by the commonplace.

The most interesting part of the valley lies between Woodlands and the Pocantico Hills; here resided, during the Revolution, a band of obscure heroes, whose patriotic devotion and daring exploits have never been worthily recorded. After the retreat of Washington and his army from White Plains, the Neutral Ground “became infested by roving bands, claiming either side, British or American, and all pretending to redress wrongs and punish political offenses; but all



prone, in the exercise of their high functions, to sack hen-roosts, drive off cattle, and lay farmhouses under contribution."

"Such," says Irving, in his chronicle of Wolfert's Roost, "was the origin of two great orders of border chivalry, the Skinners and the Cow Boys, famous in Revolutionary story; the former fought, or rather marauded, under the American, the latter under the British, banner. In the zeal of service both were apt to make blunders, and confound the property of friend and foe. Neither of them, in the heat and hurry of a foray, had time to ascertain the politics of a horse or cow which they were driving off into captivity; nor, when they wrung the neck of a rooster, did they trouble their heads whether he crowed for Congress or King George. To check these enormities a confederacy was formed among the yeomanry who had suffered from these maraudings. It was composed for the most part of farmers' sons, bold, hard-riding lads, well armed and well mounted, and undertook to clear the country round of Skinner and Cow Boy, and all other border vermin; as the Holy Brotherhood in old times cleared Spain of the banditti which infested her highways."

Several companies were organized, each having a specified district to protect. The first company was stationed at Yonkers, so near the British outposts that it did but little effective service; the second had its headquarters farther north, in what is now the village of Elmsford; while a few miles north of the second was stationed the third company, guarding the Upper Crossroads. Together they formed the Southern Battalion of Westchester Militiamen, commanded by Colonel Joseph Drake.

Among those who enlisted in the second company were Cornelius and Peter Van Tassel, Hendrick Romer, Abraham Martling, Jacob Acker, Peter Bout, Solomon Utter, Nicholas Boncker and Jacob and Abraham Boyce; and in the third company Jacob Romer and his five sons, John and

Gibbert Dean, Isaac See and John Yerks—all uncompromising patriots, who remained faithful to their country in the face of many hardships, and performed prodigies of valor which render them as deserving of a place in history as are their more fortunate comrades-in-arms, Paulding, Williams and Van Wart, the immortal captors of Major John André. For these humble heroes were obliged to wage continuous warfare with the enemy, and to keep ever on the alert to defend themselves and neighbors against the frequent invasions of pillaging Cow Boys and Hessian troopers.

The brunt of the unequal strife was borne by the second or middle company, of which Abraham Storms was the captain, and Cornelius Van Tassel and Abraham Martling the lieutenants. Its headquarters were in Van Tassel's farmhouse, on the old Sawmill River road, one mile south of Elmsford. Indeed, Elmsford and its vicinity are covered over with relics and landmarks of the Revolution; every stick and stone is associated with some thrilling incident of the past. The present village stands on a plain which, in those eventful times, was occupied by the farms of several members of the second company. Peter Van Tassel, Jacob Acker, Abraham Martling, Jacob Boyce, Solomon Utter and Hendrick Romer lived in the valley, or on the sloping hillsides which enclosed it, and Captain Storm himself ran a tavern in the settlement. The farmhouse of Cornelius Van Tassel is situated at the southern extremity of this plain; and here the highway leading to New York turns westward, and then southward again, to pass through a wooded ravine, where the hills on both sides of the Neperan approach each other shutting out a view of the country below. This conformation of the land rendered the yeomanry of the district peculiarly liable to surprise by foraging parties of the enemy, who, concealed by the ravine, could approach to the very confines of the plain before their presence was discovered.

In order to provide against such a contingency, the patriots selected a rocky fastness on Beaver Mountain, west of the settlement, for a hiding place, to which they could resort for safety whenever the British came up the valley in too great force to be successfully resisted, and established a signal station on a hill opposite. Their watch tower was an enormous boulder, which is still known by its Revolutionary name, "Sentinel Rock," from the summit of which the road running southward through the valley can be seen for miles. Whenever a detachment of Delancey's Rangers, or a troop of Hessian cavalry, were descried advancing by the sentinel on watch, he gave the signal for his neighbors to collect their valuables and make for their stronghold by blowing a loud blast on a horn. Then the cattle were driven into the woods, and the men, arming themselves with the flintlock muskets of those days, escorted the women and children to their place of refuge on Beaver Mountain. Here, on a natural platform of rock, the fugitives pitched their camp. The inaccessibility of the place secured them from assault, and they were partly protected from the weather by an overhanging precipice that towered above the platform on the western side.

When the enemy arrived at the farmhouses, they found them emptied of their valuables and deserted. In revenge they devastated the fields and burned down the barns, after securing all the provender they could carry away. Sometimes, however, they were not allowed to escape with their booty. On one occasion, at least, the patriots surprised them in their depredations, and drove them away with considerable loss. In a field, formerly owned by Cornelius Van Tassel, where an old apple-tree once stood, lie the remains of a Hessian trooper and five other marauders, who were killed in that skirmish.

During one of the inroads of the British up the valley, Christina Romer, the wife of Hendrick Romer, the militiaman, acted the part of a heroine. Their farmhouse was situ-

ated at the foot of Beaver Mountain, and was separated from the forest that covered the slope by a stone wall. Christina had stayed behind the other fugitives—who had fled to the hiding place on hearing the first signal of the horn from “Sentinel Rock”—and was surprised by the enemy before she could make good her escape. They immediately pressed her into service to bake bread and roast the ribs of an ox they had secured in their foray, in the big Dutch oven in the chimney of her kitchen. While performing this task it occurred to her that her neighbors in hiding on Beaver Mountain were more in need of food than her enemies. So she set apart a goodly portion of the bread and beef with the idea of supplying their wants at the first opportunity. In the meantime she waited upon the British troopers with a cheerfulness and alacrity artfully calculated to disarm them of suspicion. When they were resting after the meal, and she was supposed to be washing dishes in the kitchen, she quietly slipped out of the back door, crossed the yard to the stone wall, and deposited the provisions she had saved on the side next the forest. She knew very well that the house was being closely watched by her friends on the mountain, and that her movements would probably be seen by one of their scouts. This proved to be the case; for, she had barely regained the kitchen, when Hendrick Romer, who had been watching nearby to see that no harm befell his wife, secured the food and conveyed it to the fugitives. The British lodged in the farmhouse several days, and each day Christina managed to supply her friends with food from their larder. Had it not been for her thoughtfulness and courage they must have perished from hunger, as they were wholly without provisions to undergo so long a siege. The ruins of the Romer farmhouse and the stone wall behind which the militiaman’s wife secreted the bread and meat are pointed out to strangers by the descendants of this patriotic woman, who still reside in the neighborhood.

On the night of November 17, 1777, a large band of Brit-

ish troopers and Cow Boys, commanded by the notorious Captain Emmerick, made an excursion up the Sawmill Valley, and completely surprised the little settlement. After setting fire to the tavern of Captain Abraham Storm, they surrounded the houses of Cornelius and Peter Van Tassel, which stood on adjoining farms, and called upon the inmates to come out and surrender themselves. Instead of complying, the gallant brothers discharged their muskets at their besiegers, and made a strong show of resistance. This so enraged the British that they set fire to both houses and burned them to the ground. Driven out by the flames, the brave yeomen, who had defended their homes single-handed against a host of enemies, were forced to deliver themselves up. The inhuman Captain Emmerick allowed their wives and children to be stripped of the necessary apparel to cover them from the severity of a bitterly cold night, and led the captive brothers in triumph to New York. Tied to their horses' tails, they were compelled to drive their own cattle into the camp of the enemy. The wife of Cornelius Van Tassel sought refuge in an old dirt cellar in the farmyard, carrying her infant daughter in her arms. Here they were discovered, half-clad and shivering with the cold, by a Hessian trooper, who, touched by their pitiable condition, threw them a feather mattress that he had taken from the burning house—an act of mercy which undoubtedly saved their lives, as they remained in the dirt cellar until the following night, with no other covering than the mattress to shield them from the rigor of the weather. Then, shortly after dark, Mrs. Van Tassel heard the neighing of a horse in the farmyard. It proved to be one of the animals that had been driven off by the enemy the night before and that had evidently escaped from its new quarters below to return to its old home. The faithful creature carried the mother and child to friends living near the Upper Cross Roads.

No account of the surprise and capture of the Van Tassel brothers would be complete without a description of the

daring bravery displayed by the son of Cornelius Van Tassel upon that occasion. When the British surrounded his father's house, and demanded the surrender of the inmates, Cornelius Van Tassel, Jr., was asleep in his room in the attic. His slumbers were rudely broken by the discharge of his father's musket, and, taking his own weapon from its hook on the wall, he engaged actively in the defense of their home. Even when the house was in flames, and the rest of the family had been driven out by fire and smoke, it never occurred to him to surrender; but, crouching behind the kitchen door, he awaited an opportunity to escape from the burning building to the refuge on Beaver Mountain. The British troopers were standing outside in groups, gazing with diabolical satisfaction at the conflagration they had caused, when suddenly out of the flames sprang a bare-headed youth wielding a clubbed musket in both hands. Before they could recover from their astonishment, he had felled two of them to the ground and was off across the fields to the Sawmill River. He plunged into the icy current and gained the other side amid a shower of bullets. Then, halting just long enough to send a parting shot at the troopers who pursued him, he resumed his flight and soon reached a place of safety. The Van Tassel brothers were confined for nearly a year in the Provost Gaol, New York, as prisoners of war, and, when finally exchanged, found their families reduced to a condition of pauperism.

On learning of the disaster that had befallen his friends, Abraham Martling, locally known as "Brom Marlin," meditated and planned a signal stroke of vengeance which, for boldness of conception and vigor of execution, was worthy of one of Homer's heroes. Taking into his confidence Jacob Acker, Nicholas Boncker, Jacob Boyce and several other militiamen of equal courage, he repaired to the station of the Water Guard at Wolfert's Roost, on the Hudson, and there concocted a midnight invasion of New York island to pillage and burn the splendid mansion of the Tory chief,



Oliver Delancey, situated on the heights of Bloomingdale, in the very heart of the British camp. The Water Guard was an "aquatic corps, in the pay of government, organized to range the waters of the Hudson and keep watch upon the movements of the enemy's fleet. It was composed of nautical men of the river and hardy youngsters of the adjacent country, expert at pulling an oar and handling a musket." The captain of the Wolfert's Roost station was Jacob Van Tassel, a relative of the captive brothers—a valiant Dutchman, whose many brave deeds have been immortalized by Irving in his chronicle of the Roost.

At this station Martling secured two light whale-boats, manned by expert river-men, and, early in the evening of November 25th, 1777, embarked, with a band of chosen heroes, on his perilous enterprise. It was a second expedition of the Argonauts, with Martling for its Jason, and glory for its golden fleece. The two whaleboats, shaped like canoes and formed to skim lightly over the water, were rowed with great rapidity down the river until the territory of the enemy's Water Guard was reached; then the oars were muffled, and, pulling noiselessly along under shadow of the land, the boats glided like spectres past hostile frigates and guardships to their destination. There Martling and his band disembarked, and, scaling the rugged heights of Bloomingdale, surprised the patrol at Delancey's Mansion, pillaged and burned the great house, and, before the enemy could recover from their amazement, made good their retreat to the boats. As the whole river was now illuminated by the conflagration, their escape seemed impossible; yet, notwithstanding that the enemy's fleet were warned of their presence by alarm guns on the shore, so gallantly did Van Tassel's river-men bend to their oars, that, favored by their knowledge of every sheltering cove and protecting promontory, they eluded the guns of the foe and reached home in safety.

The chief glory of this daring exploit rests with Abraham Martling, its projector. A more ardent patriot never lived. At the beginning of the Revolutionary War he enlisted in the Continental Army, and saw considerable service in the principal campaigns. He was in the memorable Battle of Yorktown and, after the close of the war, retired to his little farm at Elmsford, where he died January 1st, 1841, at the advanced age of eighty-two years. While passing through the Neutral Ground, recently, to collect material for this article, I visited Martling's grave, in the little cemetery of the Reformed Church, at Elmsford, and was grieved to find it sadly neglected. The modest gravestone is cracked and broken, and the mound covering the remains of the old hero overgrown with rank grass and brambles. The graves of several other Revolutionary soldiers in this cemetery are in a similar condition, notably that of Solomon Utter, the carpenter-soldier, who made the gallows on which Major André was hanged. His tombstone lies in two pieces on the ground, and there is no mound to indicate his last resting-place. Even the granite shaft erected over the remains of Isaac Van Wart, one of André's captors, by the citizens of Westchester county, is greatly in need of repair.

There is one grave in the cemetery, however, which is cared for with tender solicitude. It is that of John Romer, a militiaman of the Revolution, and a captain in the War of 1812, who died in 1855, age of ninety-two, in the house which he and his father-in-law, Cornelius Van Tassel, had erected on the foundations of the building burned by Captain Emmerick in his raid up the Sawmill Valley. Captain John Romer's daughter Angeline, married William Hamilton, a grandson of Alexander Hamilton. There were two children of this marriage: one, Rev. Edgar A. Hamilton, now (1917) of Sussex, N. J., and the other, Colonel J. C. L. Hamilton, who gained his commission in the Civil War, and now lives in retirement at Elmsford, within a stone's-throw



of the old burying-ground, to whose veneration it is due that the veteran's grave is kept in order.

I succeeded in persuading Colonel Hamilton to accompany me through the historic region I am describing, and I could not have found a better guide. Brought up in this locality, and descended from the Van Tassels and Romers, he lives in the history and traditions of the past. He is familiar with every foot of the Neutral Ground, and is in possession of a fund of information concerning Revolutionary events and characters, obtained direct from the lips of persons who lived in those stirring times. He told me that his grandfather, Captain John Romer, was one of the band that escorted Major André to Colonel Jameson's headquarters at North Castle, on the day of his capture. John Romer was a lad of seventeen at the time; and whenever he related the circumstances attending the apprehension of the spy, in later life, it was always with an expression of regret that John Yerks, the militiaman who planned the expedition which resulted so fortunately, should not have received equal recognition with Paulding, Williams and Van Wart.

On the day preceding André's capture, Yerks proposed to Paulding—both of them being at that time stationed in North Salem—that they should organize a party to go to the vicinity of Tarrytown to prevent cattle being driven down toward New York, and to seize as a loyal prize any such cows or oxen as might be destined for His Majesty's troops by their friends. Paulding at first objected; but, upon further consideration, volunteered his services, provided they could induce a sufficient number to accompany them. Yerks assured him that this could be easily accomplished, and offered to procure the men, while Paulding should obtain the necessary permit from the commanding officer. While the latter was absent on this errand, Yerks enlisted three volunteers—Isaac See, James Romer, a brother of John Romer, and Abraham Williams. Paulding soon afterward returned with the permit, accompanied by

his friend, Isaac Van Wart. The party, now consisting of six, took the direct road for Cross River, where they were joined by David Williams, from Bedford.

They passed the night in a hay-barrack, near the present Methodist Church at Pleasantville, and early the next morning followed the windings of the Sawmill Valley to the house of Captain Jacob Romer, the father of one of their band, where they obtained breakfast, and a basin well provided for their dinner. From this place they marched to the hill immediately above Tarrytown, where it was agreed that Paulding, Van Wart and David Williams should guard the road below, while the remaining four should watch the one above, with the full understanding—according to the story told John Romer by his brother James, and John Yerks—that whatever might be taken should be equally divided among the whole band. The upper party were stationed two hundred yards east on the hill above the lower party; yet this small separation of six hundred feet proved in the sequel to constitute all the vast difference between immortality and obscurity. The names of Paulding, Williams and Van Wart are emblazoned on the pages of history, while those of their equally deserving, but less fortunate, comrades are known to but few.

Immediately after the capture of André the lower party joined the upper, and all proceeded again to the house of Captain Jacob Romer, where they partook of refreshments. Colonel Hamilton showed me the pewter basin from which they ate. It was bequeathed to him by his grandfather, who was present on the occasion, and afterward accompanied the party to North Castle. He also showed me the military equipment of a Continental soldier which was worn at one time by John Romer. Upon the delivery of their prisoner at Colonel Jameson's headquarters, the seven patriots separated, little imagining the importance of their prize. That Congress should afterward have recognized but three of them—granting them medals and pensions—

without taking any notice of the other four, seems, in view of the circumstances above narrated, to have been an act of injustice. The house in which Major André is said to have slept on the night prior to his apprehension is carefully preserved on the estate of John D. Rockefeller, a little north of the city of Tarrytown.—*Frank Leslie's Popular Monthly*, July, 1897.

## HOW \$150 WILL SAVE PATRIOTS' GRAVES.

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Historic Greenburgh Churchyard, in Westchester, Needs  
Only That Much to Cover a Health Tax—Noted  
Revolutionary Fighters Who Lie Under  
Its Old Stones.

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All good Revolutionary soldiers would turn in their graves if they knew the fate that may fall to their companions-in-arms who are buried in the cemetery of the old Greenburgh Reformed Church, at Elmsford, Westchester county. For a tax of \$150 has been levied on the church property as its share of the burden in a large drainage scheme, and the church is too poor to pay that amount, and unless it does pay, the county will sell the property. Then the "final resting place" of a score of Revolutionary heroes might be the final resting place no more.

Elmsford has a railroad station of its own, where the Putnam Division of the New York Central crosses the trolley line from White Plains to Tarrytown. It has also a postoffice, a few stores, a saloon, and at least one garage. But just at present the chief center of interest is the graveyard by the old church.

There is nothing especially romantic about the setting of this little graveyard today. The dust from hundreds of automobiles, returning cityward after vacations, sifts around its tombstones.

But men like Colonel Hamilton, a patriarch of the town and a great-grandson of Alexander Hamilton, forget railroad tracks and dust, saloons, and automobiles, and remember the cemetery as it used to be. It was within a hundred yards, they recall, that one of the battles of the Revolutionary War was fought. It was across the line of those very tracks that Cornelius Van Tassel, Jr., fled, dodging the shots of the English, who were burning his father's house. It was down that road all the way to the Hall of Records, in Manhattan, that old Van Tassel himself, his hands tied to his horse's tail, had to drive his cattle.

Colonel Hamilton, who fought through the Civil War—two years in the Fifth New York Regiment, "Duryea's Zouaves," and three years in the light artillery—has followed the fortunes of the church for more than half a century. In 1855 he planted on the church property four spruces, one of which still stands over the grave of his grandfather, John Romer, the son-in-law of Van Tassel. A quarter of a century ago, when the church fell into bad repair, he kalsomined the ceiling with his own hands. He gave a new stove to replace the old box stoves, whose tin chimney, after rambling around the church, supposedly distributing warmth finally made an exit through a hole in the middle of the roof, from which the soot dropped like mud on rainy days. This spring, when the congregation had sunk to half a dozen persons, he helped reorganize the church, and now, with his son, he is busy upholstering the interior and patching up the wall paper where it had fallen off. It is he who sent out an appeal for the saving of the old cemetery.

When the Rev. Robert Bolton was writing his history of Westchester County, he used to make regular visits to the home of Colonel Hamilton's grandfather in Elmsford. There three patriarchs would assemble to recount Westchester history, as they had seen it. John Romer, the grandfather, was ninety-one years old when he died; Christina Romer lived to be one hundred and four. The third member of the

trio was Peter See. Colonel Hamilton, then a boy, used sometimes to sit on a stool at their feet, listening to their tales, and thus he got an insight into that history which has been his hobby ever since.

At the time of his grandfather's death, the colonel planted the four spruce trees in the old burial ground to shelter the graves of his ancestors. Three of the trees died or had to be cut down. Only one now stands, with a venerable weeping willow near by. Beneath are a score of graves, some of the tombstones erect and some fallen, and many worn till the dates are gone, and even the deeper cut names are unrecognizable.

In the center of the plot a simple white obelisk marks the grave of Captain Isaac Van Wart, one of the captors of Major André.

On the night before the capture of André, seven militiamen, of whom Van Wart was one, spent the night at the house of Captain Jacob Romer, Colonel Hamilton's great-grandfather, in East View. The next morning they split into two parties, one of four and one of three. The story of how the three men found the British soldier in civilian clothes; how, after receiving contradictory answers to their questions, they searched him, and how they finally found in his boots the proofs of his negotiations with Benedict Arnold for the betrayal of West Point—all this is a matter of history.

James Romer, a son of Jacob, was one of the seven, but unfortunately went with the four and not the three. Before the seven left the house that morning they borrowed a pack of cards, and the wife of Jacob Romer put up a lunch for them. James carried it in a pewter basin. In the excitement of the capture, the basin was left behind, but John Romer, a lad of sixteen years, was sent back for it. It now stands on Colonel Hamilton's mantelpiece.

His grave was not Van Wart's only connection with the old Greenburgh Church. He was an elder, and for a

time choirmaster. Hymn books were scarce in those days, and Van Wart was one of the only two church members who possessed such a thing. The other was the minister.

At the close of the Revolution Van Wart recruited a company of militia, with John Romer and William Hammond. The three took the positions, respectively, of captain, lieutenant, and ensign. When Van Wart resigned, the others were promoted and took in Dennis Cronk, an ensign. William Hammond later rose to be a general. The graves of all four lie within a man's length of each other, under the willow tree in the little Elmsford cemetery. Dennis Cronk, incidentally, was a near relative of Hiram Cronk, the last survivor of the war of 1812.

In 1777 the English surrounded the house of Cornelius Van Tassel—John Romer's father-in-law—and dragged the family out into the cold winter air. His daughter they tied and left on the frozen ground. They proceeded to pillage his house, carrying out the furniture piece by piece. Cornelius's son hid in the attic, but when he saw that they were about to set fire to the house he tried a forlorn hope. Picking up one of the few remaining pieces of furniture, he deliberately carried it out of the house into the midst of the company of British. As he had hoped, for a moment they took him for one of their own number. Gradually edging away from the main crowd, he finally made a dash for liberty across the place where the railroad tracks now run down to the bank of the Neperan, the old Sawmill River. The English gave chase and fired at him, but he escaped.

Meanwhile, the house was burned to the ground. Van Tassel was tied by his hands to his horse's tail, and made to walk in that fashion to New York, driving his cattle before him. He was taken to the gaol where the Hall of Records now stands and imprisoned for eleven months.

Across the tiny cemetery from the graves of all these men, a broken white stone marks that of Solomon Utter, who made the gallows from which Major André was hung. Why

a citizen of Elmsford should have got this task is part of lost history, as the date on his tombstone will soon be, but the fact is there recorded, and there is no reason to doubt it. At the time of the trial and execution of André in Tappantown, across the river, in October, 1780, all Elmsford ferried over to attend. Even the Bible on which the oaths were taken came from Elmsford.

Other stones there are with the names of Revolutionary soldiers whose history is written nowhere, probably, but here. Many more graves were marked by common field stones, with not so much as an inscription on them, and all these have now disappeared. Abraham Martling—his grave is close under the willow—may be remembered not only because he died on New Year's Day, 1841, but because in revenge for the burning of Van Tassel's house he went to Bloomingdale and burned that of the Tory lieutenant-governor.

When the Rev. Silas Constant, who had been ordained as an evangelist by the Presbytery of Morris County in 1784, became pastor of the Presbyterian Church at Hanover, now Yorktown, Westchester County, he by no means spent all his time within the church walls. His diary, kept carefully for twenty years, shows that he travelled far and wide, preaching in the country homes. At the house of Archer Reed, in East View, he preached for the first time—text, Jeremiah 1: 5—on February 8, 1787, and he held services frequently there in the next two years.

For almost a century the little Greenburgh Church flourished. In 1825 a branch was established at Dobbs Ferry, where it is now the First Presbyterian Church. In 1829 it assisted in erecting the White Plains Presbyterian Church, that had been burned in 1776. In 1852 the congregation decided to unite with the Reformed Church, and it has since remained with that denomination. It established a mission at Hastings, now known as the First Reformed Church.



Colonel Hamilton remembers the day when, in spite of the fact that the church still had only two hymnals, there were 150 or 200 men and women every Sunday in the congregation, and a hundred children in the Sabbath school—many of them coming from three, four and five miles away. At this time Samuel Howland was the owner of the second hymn book, and he was the first to afford the luxury of cushions in his pew. But about twenty-five years ago things began to go downhill. The old people had died, and the younger ones had sold their land and moved away. Gradually the congregation dwindled, and its funds dwindled, until there was little left to the old Greenburgh Church but a half dozen living and a few score dead.

Such was the state of affairs at the beginning of 1911. But for some years the village of Elmsford had been growing again. What there was left of the church found itself in the center of a large and increasing population. The church was reorganized; a successful appeal for funds was made to the Domestic Board of Missions; and the sum obtained—swelled by local subscription of \$400—was enough to pay the salary of a pastor.

Then, just when every effort had been expended to give the church a fresh start, and when prospects of success seemed brightest, Colonel Hamilton found that a drainage tax of about \$150 had been levied against the church property. This was the last straw. Where should they raise another \$150, after all the good citizens had gone deep into their pockets and barely obtained enough to repair the church and pay the pastor's salary? Colonel Hamilton thought that one way, perhaps, was to send out an appeal to all the patriotic citizens and societies in Westchester, and this he did on September 1.

The story of the origin of that tax is a long one, but here is the sum of it: The valley had long been called malarial, and at least two property owners put in applications for draining it, in order to make it more healthy. The petition

was finally accepted, and eventually the work was done—at a cost of about \$150,000. From most taxes church property is exempt, but, as this was levied on the ground of health, all property became affected. Thus the graveyard was taxed for an improvement of its health conditions. The church property was assessed \$150, and by the payment or non-payment of that the old Greenburgh Church must stand or fall. If the tax remains unpaid, the property must be advertised and sold. Who can tell who would buy it? Perhaps some rival of the owner of the garage across the way, who might use the tombstones for paving blocks and the graves for a pit, and sell gasoline at nineteen cents a gallon.

But even Colonel Hamilton thinks this a piece of fancy.

“Who would be so heartless as to destroy the graveyard, even if they did buy the property?” says he, and he may be right.

It would be a shame on the church and on the community and on all patriotic citizens if the Revolutionary graveyard had to be sold. So far the Colonel has collected exactly \$5.50—five dollars from a friend and fifty cents from an automobile tourist who stopped to explore the graves, and to him the old veteran told the story of the church’s need.—

—*Evening Post*, New York, September 16, 1911.

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Colonel Hamilton writes under date of December 9, 1915:

“I raised the \$150.00 and paid all claims against the church property and cleared it from all incumbrance. The donor of the \$150.00, Mr. James B. Hammond of type-writer fame, and a descendant of Colonel James Hammond of the First Regiment of Westchester County Troops during the Revolution, also gave funds to purchase three extra lots, and his estate paid the cost of building a stone wall around the property.”





COLONEL (REV.) EDGAR A. HAMILTON

COLONEL (REV.) EDGAR A. HAMILTON.

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PERSONAL REMINISCENCES

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MY DEAR COUSIN :

These war recollections, hastily gathered up out of memory, I fear may not be germane to the subject matter of your contemplated pamphlet.

The only point of contact, perhaps, is the dear old Revolutionary nest in Greenburgh which brooded us in childhood's days. Anything which can be said to endear to others the honorable name and amiable character of our venerable grandfather meets with my enthusiastic sympathy. His patriotism, upright life, and sterling worth, widely appreciated by his contemporaries, should be gratefully treasured through later years. No one event has ever made a more lasting impression upon me than when, kneeling with my brother at his bedside, he put his trembling hands upon our heads and with dying breath, at 91 years of age, said: "God bless you; grow up, my children, to be good men."

The early experiences of my life were exciting ones as I recall them now. Born in a large double log cabin upon the stretches of Wisconsin—the principal center of lead mining operations owned by William S. Hamilton, a younger son of Alexander Hamilton (my great-uncle), whose generous hospitality gathered such men as General Dodge, Elihu B. Washburn, and Senator Charles Stephenson under his

roof, while the Blackfeet Indians held high carnival about his doors and were frequently driven away with the whip in his hand. He was small in stature, but the Indians stood in wholesome awe of his authority. Prairie wolves upon winter nights would visit and howl in the windows and were only driven away by tossing firebrands.

My beloved mother, fearing such environments might not be conducive to the welfare of her young children, gathered us up in her arms and entered upon that long journey by stage to Chicago, boat to Buffalo, canal to Albany, and stage coach which dropped her at the head of Washington Irving Lane. Soon an old tenant—Isaac Concklin, whom you remember, living in a hollow of the woodland heights beyond the pitching place—found us and carried the children over the heights and down the hillsides to the dear old home of welcome, were those early days in which you shared, were sunny with innocent play outside, and within bright with the smiles of protecting love and care.

The first break on that smooth road was the departure for school life at Antioch College, in southern Ohio, September, 1860.

The air was growing tense with apprehension. That winter of national discontent intruded other thoughts than study, and classes were often interspersed with drills and marches and athletic exercises, anticipating the future needs. The flag was often in evidence. When Sumter's guns broke the silence, upon that momentous April day, the telegram calling for 75,000 volunteers was answered before night by sixteen of us, enlisting in defense of the country, and so we marched away to Washington.

I prize that early act of enlistment as one of the praiseworthy deeds of my youth.

The first war experiences were illuminating but not very happy. Raw, untrained, and not toughened, life became very strenuous and its demands beyond physical endurance. When the regiment marched from Georgetown through

Washington across Long Bridge to Alexandria and miles beyond it to camp upon the left wing of General McDowell's Army, destined for Bull Run, it was exhausting, trudging in heavy marching order for fifteen miles, to be immediately put on sentry duty and left unrelieved for sixteen hours. It produced extreme weariness followed by malarial fever and back into the hospital instead of on to Bull Run, where I was discharged from the service.

At home I began recruiting in New York City. Then a commission from Governor Morgan landed me at Fortress Monroe, Virginia, in a cavalry squadron. Studious application, sympathetic care and wise discipline, resulted in advancement, and when the spring campaign opened under General McClellan, I held command of a troop of cavalry. This troop led the right wing of the army to Yorktown, where the first Confederate guns of that campaign broke the silence, hurtling past the log upon which old General Heintzelman and I sat discussing whether a charge I volunteered to make might not capture the piece. The General waited General McClellan's arrival, and the advance of the Southern troops lost the opportunity and led to a delay of three weeks at Yorktown.

Prior to the Pennsylvania campaign, upon March 7th and 8th, the Battle of the Merrimac and Monitor took place—the initiation of battle experiences for me.

While in camp, the distant salvos of artillery broke the afternoon silence; "boots and saddles," rang out, and mounted men at the heels of General Max Weber galloped away to the scene of strife at Newport News. The wooded road hid all sight, but the constant cannonading indicated what was before us. As the plain opened near Newport News, the Merrimac challenged our advance with a high shell, unhorsing a few officers and uprooting a great tree in our advance. With tightened rein, the horses were sped on and drew up in the rear of the only buildings upon the bluffs. There, standing to horse, with shattered bricks falling upon

us, and the noise of cannonry filling our ears, we looked upon the first day's battle and its carnage. At our right, with its flag at mast, the sloop of war Cumberland went down with her killed and wounded, the water full of men and their rescuers. Upon our front steamed back and forth the Merrimac—firing at every turn, and somewhat beyond her three other Confederate vessels. At our left the frigate Congress, aground, decks strewed with her dead and wounded, still firing.

Impatient at our inaction, I gained permission to take twenty men to the river's edge, and lying down, we shot at the open portholes of the Merrimac and fired upon approaching boats attempting to capture the men of the Congress. Farther at the left, in shallow water and aground, lay the Minnesota, replying with her broadsides to the Merrimac; and farther away two other United States vessels, keeping beyond the range of the Merrimac's shells.

Thus night drew on, and the Confederate monster withdrew to her moorings in Elizabeth River.

At night I was sent with a small detachment to picket the road toward Yorktown. Wild rumors of large numbers of Confederate troops approaching were about. The parallel road along the James River did have a force under General Magruder within striking distance, awaiting the work of the Merrimac. Fear prevailed over duty, and without orders, I brought my detachment in, arriving at midnight in time to witness the explosion of the Congress.

The prevailing feeling that night was one of gloom. We looked for the next day's work to end in defeat—our army outnumbered, our navy *hors de combat*, the fortress with no guns equal to the Merrimac; but unknown to us the Monitor steamed in and hid herself behind the Minnesota, hardly distinguishable above the waters. Our little command of mounted men, encamped near by, were held in readiness for any emergency. The officers climbed to the roof of the Chesapeake Female Seminary, and witnessed the great spectacle



of the day. For three hours the struggle went on. Thrilling sensations of hope and fear hung on every move and shot. The battering, the ramming, maneuvering, unintermittent on each side, held our attention, only a mile away. When the Merrimac retired, the suspense gave way, and the unbounded joy of relief made us wild with excitement. The fortress was safe; we had escaped prison; the battle was won. That day's work changed the character of naval warfare forever.

The next episode reveals the varied features of war. It was no less than the capture of the city of Norfolk—a glorious ending to a very inglorious beginning.

My orders placed me upon a huge canal boat instead of a war vessel. A tug towed it across the bay toward Ocean View. It was heavily laden and went aground one-half mile from shore. Infantry firing was going on at Sewall's Point and along the Elizabeth River. A crane was rigged. Men took equipments and ammunition in small boats to shore. The horses were swung overboard, guided to the shore, caught and saddled, and a wild race followed for ten miles, bringing us to the earthworks and abandoned guns. We leaped the works, and followed our more fortunate squadron into the city, where its keys were placed in the hands of our Commander, signifying its surrender. It was a bloodless victory, but accompanied with great results for the Union—giving the Navy Yard a port and a hold upon the south side of the James River.

Three days after this we were again in the saddle charging into Suffolk, eighteen miles south, upon the heels of the Southern army, hastening to reinforce the troops defending Richmond. This daring ride was heralded far and wide in the North. Soon an order from Washington was received to dash across the State of North Carolina and open up connections with General Burnside upon Albemarle Sound. This experience—for endurance and exposure and for continuance—was not again matched by us during the whole

war. A strange country, lonely roads, unbridged rivers, numerous marshes, no reserves, Southern militia, guerillas, small bodies of the enemy creeping upon every picket post, gathering at every vantage place, sudden attacks in front and rear, flanks exposed, 300 men arousing the whole countryside with antagonism, without any knowledge of the numbers attacking us. After five days of incessant vigilance, overcoming obstacles, with only two and a half hours' sleep, with comparatively no loss of life or material, the country making good the horses lost, the command, then a battalion, was transferred to Suffolk for outpost duty. At this time orders were received to recruit the battalion up to a regiment, and the superior officers were ordered North upon recruiting service. Contrary to my inclination, I was held at the front, in command of three companies, to watch the south shore of the James River, up to Smithfield to watch Nansemond and Isle of Wight Counties up to Surrey, and to patrol the lines of the Blackwater River where a force of Confederates was stationed. Those were weeks of trying service, mostly in saddle, engaged in scouting, marching, picket duty, skirmishing, watching any possible advance of the enemy, and interrupting any illicit traffic between the lines, through spies, or others. This, at the time unwelcome experience, was an efficient drill fitting for the after years.

Noteworthy among these numerous forays were the Battle of the Deserted House, under General Corcoran; the Battle of Ely's Cross Roads, under Major (now General) Wheelan; the siege of Suffolk, where, with a hundred men, the left flank of General Longstreet's army and the investiture of the town was delayed for twenty-four hours. For twenty miles we slowly contested the advance. The bridge across the Nansemond River was blown up, leaving us outside. We escaped by swimming the river under fire of our guns, and thus reached safety. Following this siege, at Cox's Mills, accompanying a force of seventy-five men, after a full day of skirmishing, with ammunition expended, we were

ambuscaded by a superior force. Caught on a corduroy road, flanked by swamps, we fell back with a loss of sixty out of seventy-five men. The officer with a sabre stroke cutting his mouth, and his breast cut, and myself with the cape of my coat slit by a sword, succeeded in rallying fifteen men, and with only naked blades, recharged a mile and held the field. It was a hand-to-hand engagement, striking with butts of pistols and carbines, pulling from horses, wrestling, while horses ran wild over the men. The memory of this action still tingles in my blood.

The year's work upon this front was exchanged in July, 1863, to the Peninsula, with headquarters at Williamsburg. As before and afterwards, our position was the nearest to Richmond of any Union troops. The Confederates intrusted the Peninsula between Richmond and Williamsburg to the care of two bands of guerilla or irregular troops—trained marksmen and woodsmen from Mississippi, Alabama and Virginia, under leaders acquainted with every nook and corner of the land. The work was not coveted—it was trying, it taxed ingenuity, there was need of strategy. Death came not from the open but most frequently from bushes and hidden coverts, picking men off by twos and threes. There was little opportunity for military glory, but much thought to meet inconspicuous fighting, brush skirmish, picket shooting and secret scouting. The advantages were all with the enemy. Their emissaries carried information and assumed all sorts of disguises to learn our plans.

The capture of the Hampton Legion at Charles City Court House, nine miles from Richmond, and a bushwhacking trip may set forth the ordinary experiences of our warfare upon the Peninsula.

A well-planned and skillful capture of Richmond, Jefferson Davis, his cabinet, and liberation of Libby prisoners, was undertaken, and thwarted by an unforeseen circumstance. At that period Richmond was divested of troops. General Butler was well aware of conditions. Quietly, an infantry

force was increased at Williamsburg and an additional cavalry regiment was brought there. Every field officer was given a map and specific instructions as to his work. Two nights before the march, a prisoner escaped from our guard house—he was a murderer of one of my lieutenants, a particular friend. The guard over the prisoner filed his fetters, gave him the countersign, communicated the effort to be made. The man went to Richmond and told his story. General Pickett was ordered up from Petersburg with his brigade and a battery. Reaching Bolton's Bridge, upon Chickahominy River, we were turned back with a loss of six men, facing guns and infantry, which disclosed the fact that our plans were known and checkmated at Richmond.

In the early winter of 1864, a very successful reconnaissance was made up the Peninsula. The storm and blackness of the night kept our march from the enemy's notice. Reaching the Chickahominy River at daylight, the pickets were surprised. A quick gallop of six miles brought us to Charles City Court House, where a part of the Hampton Legion was encamped. Nine miles from Richmond, mistaking a tented field for the enemy's quarters, the regiment charged it, when a guide riding back informed me that the main body occupied the Court House at the right. With a rear-guard of forty men, we swung sabers, advanced carbines, mounted the hill, receiving a volley which emptied four saddles. The dash drove the enemy within, when we dismounted, broke in the rear door, cleared hallway and room after room, and forced the surrender of one hundred men, capturing all equipments. It was a clever fight with many narrow escapes. It gave the men the confidence of a dash and courage which animated them in after fields.

An extract from an affidavit made by Brevet Major Cronin of General Kautz's staff may convey a report which from my own pen would sound fulsome. In speaking of one of the scouts after guerillas, Major Cronin says:

"In planning this expedition against the enemy, Major

Hamilton made several new departures from ordinary methods of pursuing them. Moving swiftly at night in inclement weather to a base of operations several miles above our lines, and there dismounting a part of his command as flankers, secreting others, he penetrated cautiously to the scout stations at various haunts in the wilderness. He broke up the enemy's retreats at Olive Branch Church, Barnham Cross Roads, Baltimore Cross Roads, charged on to new Kent Court House, there captured five wagon loads of ammunition and quartermaster stores, and charged the force down to Bolton's Bridge. Falling back to ten miles ordinary, he took fifty men and secreted them in the woods, sending the rest of his force into camp, and watched the regathering of the guerillas. In the early morning their stealthy tread was heard in the rear, and soon upon the open road they reappeared, moving carelessly and irregularly, as if satisfied that the expedition had reached its camp. With orders to fire low and mark their men, Major Hamilton ordered his men to fire. Not a shot told, but with instant dash he led his men on a charge, put to flight the enemy, who threw away their arms, and hunted them until nightfall, when, exhausted and with blistered feet, the command returned to camp, making sixty miles in nineteen hours. The next night the Major with a new force took the York River Road after the noted leader Hume, famous upon the Peninsula, quickly routing small parties, picking up a few prisoners, reaching the supposed retreat, to find it vacated. These two scouts are typical of the work performed by the Mounted Rifles upon the Peninsula, and broke up the activity of irregular warfare for months."

From Williamsburg the regiment was ordered to join General Butler's army at Bermuda Hundred and participated in many engagements, becoming a part of the large infantry command and working in connection with it on the flanks, in front and rear.

At the battle of Fort Darling it did conspicuous work,

both in advance and on the retreat, checking a cavalry charge, protecting wounded, and permitting rear-guard engagements without broken ranks in retreat. In early summer the regiment was part of the cavalry force which held Petersburg for four hours, and only the tardiness of the infantry advance permitted General Lee's forces crossing the Appomattox, thus leading to the siege of Petersburg by General Grant.

When General Grant's army crossed to the south side of the James from the Wilderness campaign, the regiment led its Second, Third and Fifth Corps to the positions which they held so long facing the foe.

In the autumn another transfer placed the regiment upon the right flank of the army investing Richmond. Here it participated in several battles and was honorably mentioned for its service upon October 7, 1864, in the Battle of Darbytown. After the defeat of our cavalry division I carried a force of 250 men from the picket line to rifle pits and held the rifle pits against large forces until our infantry had manned their earthworks; then, retiring, was engaged the whole day, until the enemy retired at evening to their own defenses.

For seventeen days before the surrender at Appomattox Court House, the regiment was in the saddle, sent to the White House on York River, then hastily ordered to Fredericksburg on the Rappahannock; returning to Fortress Monroe, it was rushed to the northern neck of Virginia and met Mosby's command. Returning, it was refitted and forwarded to North Carolina to burn the bridge across the Roanoke River so that General Johnston's army could not unite with General Lee's army. Here news of the surrender reached us, and our fighting days closed with the capture of a Confederate major and six men.

This is a brief outline of some few experiences with a regiment which registers 104 engagements, big and little, through four years and three months of service. I came



out of the service in December, 1863, shattered in health, serving as Provost Marshal for the District of the Northern Neck, Virginia, comprising five counties, where it was my privilege and pleasure to meet some of Virginia's refined and distinguished people, receiving from them kindness and regard, rejoicing in taking their oaths of allegiance to the country.

With affection, yours,

EDGAR A. HAMILTON.

P. S.—The memoranda you ask for to supplement the military record, of course, are the quiet annals of a country pastorate.

Upon leaving the army, ill-health drove me from a commission in the regular army offered me by the Honorable William H. Seward. Also it prevented me from a contemplated profession of the law. For eight years I was upon the invalid list, hampering my studies at Oberlin, Ohio, and at the Theological Seminary, New York City. However, I spent two years with a Mission (now Covenant Church), New York City, and, through a physician's advice, was led to the mountain region to eliminate malaria absorbed from a year's camping along the Dismal Swamp of Virginia.

In 1873, an opening came to me among the foothills of the Blue Mountains in Sussex County, New Jersey. Little thought I had that it would be a life-long work. The service appealed to me from the very first. It was not beyond my physical strength, and yet varied enough in its features to deeply interest me. For ten years I was drawn into close association with the more influential people of two counties, engaging in Sabbath School, Temperance and Bible Society work in connection with my church. I had the pleasure of companionship with my old commander, Major-General Kilpatrick, and gathering in my church the principal business and professional men of the community, whose help and sympathy have been very valuable to me.

Thinking that my family would be improved in health, I emigrated to Missouri in 1883, and lived ten years at Springfield, where I organized and built the Second Presbyterian Church. It was a boom period of growth, and the little church grew perhaps to its greatest strength while I served it.

Providence, after the death of three of my family, turned my feet eastward again, and just as the hunger for New York pressed me, a very urgent invitation from my old church in Sussex County came to me. Its acceptance brought me back among these lovely hills and in the midst of familiar faces and duties, and here for twenty-three years more I have quietly lived, ministering in quiet ways to a people through four or five generations. Today I have two only of my church communion who greeted me in 1873. Several young and cheery souls of the fifth generation smile as the gray-headed pastor speaks to them.

There are compensations in a long pastorate such as mine. I have not been hustled into changes, nor fevered by ambitious methods, but have given my best to develop the best in others.

The vicinage of the city or cities has taken the youth— young men and maidens—from under my ministry, and the aged have been gathered to their fathers in quiet burial places. Perhaps we have not kept pace with the new order. The modern life does not lessen the conviction for more of the old means of prayer, scriptural fidelity and a deep Christian experience apart from worldly conformity. During these years changes have emphasized for me a gospel ministry, and, while no great increase in numbers has characterized my audiences, I note, in contrast to the dozen or more changes in other pastorates with the spasms of popularity and new voices and methods, that upon the whole there is no loss to follow the even tenor of one's way, if it is unselfish.

During these years I have served the Blair Academy as



one of its directors ; the Merriman Home for aged ministers and their wives ; the Sussex County Bible Society as its president ; and now for fifteen years have kept interested a literary society organized in my home, composed of forty young people.

Still, at seventy-five years, I walk upright, but feel, to use the military speech, the time will soon be here when I must "stack arms" and wait the summons.

The mirage of youthful military ambitions has been turned into the pool of sweet, refreshing waters of the Spirit, and when the gates swing back I look forward to the entrance where the crown of life shall be worn, only through the Father's grace, praying for my loved country and for the nations that they may strive no more but shall enjoy the victories of peace.

Your affectionate cousin,

EDGAR A. HAMILTON.

## COLONEL JOHN C. L. HAMILTON.

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### PERSONAL REMINISCENCES.

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John Cornelius Leon Hamilton, the youngest son of John C. A. Hamilton and Angeline, *née* Romer, was born in Galena, Illinois, November 29th, 1842, and is a direct descendant of General Alexander Hamilton, and Elizabeth, *née* Schuyler, on his paternal side. Captain John Romer, his grandfather, and Lieutenant Cornelius Van Tassel, both of the Revolution, were his maternal ancestors. He was educated in the public schools of the **Town of Greenburg**, Westchester County, New York.

After completing a three-year course of study at the noted Paulding Institute at Tarrytown, he was sent to Rutgers College, New Jersey, and while engaged in his studies there the call for seventy-five thousand volunteers to uphold the flag was made by the President, Abraham Lincoln, under which he enlisted as a private in Company C, Fifth New York Volunteers (Duryea's Zouaves), and participated with that heroic regiment in the first real battle of the Rebellion, at Big Bethel, Virginia. On the arrival of a portion of the regiment at Baltimore from a protracted march of one hundred and fifty miles down the eastern shore of Maryland, in December, 1861, he was detailed as private secretary to the brigade commander, and while acting as such revised and corrected for publication a voluminous manuscript upon the "Art of War," and at the same time continued the study of military engineering, under the supervision of Colonel Gouverneur K. Warren. Upon



COLONEL JOHN C. L. HAMILTON



the organization of the Third New York Artillery, early in 1862, he was commissioned a second lieutenant and joined Company G of that regiment, stationed at Fort Woodbury, near Bull Run, Virginia, and was immediately detailed to drill and instruct the officers in infantry and artillery practice at Fort Cochran, that state. The regiment having been ordered to reinforce General Burnside's expedition in North Carolina, Lieutenant Hamilton immediately after its arrival at New Berne, was detached by orders of Generals John G. Foster and Burnside from his regiment and assigned to the engineer corps. His services in this particular line of duty were of the most arduous kind. Several thousand of unskilled contrabands were employed who required constant supervision. The construction of forts, redoubts, and breastworks, and strengthening of strategic points, permitted of no rest or relief from the extreme heat and enervating climate.

Fort Macon, distant forty-two miles from New Berne, having been captured, Lieutenant Hamilton was directed to open an air line through the woods and swamps and construct observatories for the use of the signal corps to that point. When this important work was completed he was carried to the hospital, where the ravages of typhoid and malarial fever soon reduced him to a mere skeleton, so that he weighed but eighty-five pounds. His friends gave up all hope, and the chaplain had taken note of the last requests to family and friends. The turningpoint toward recovery, however, came rapidly, and when application for a leave of absence for thirty days was made it was returned endorsed, "Request denied." The services of this officer were too valuable to be spared. The attention of the medical director of the department having been called to the matter, that officer issued the desired leave, and upon its expiration, September 1st, 1862, orders from Major-General Foster directed Lieutenant Hamilton to proceed and fortify Washington, North Carolina. Four days after his arrival

there the enemy made a fierce attack upon the small garrison. For several hours the unequal hand-to-hand struggle continued in the streets and severe losses occurred upon both sides. Lieutenant Hamilton upon this occasion displayed the utmost coolness and bravery, and although the enemy had taken a large number of his men prisoners and captured four brass field pieces, the contest was continued with the fifth gun until he alone was left, twenty-two men of his command having fallen around him before the order to retreat was given.

After the battle active work upon the fortification was continued for several months, during which Mr. Hamilton gave all his spare time in connection with Lieutenant John J. Lay of the navy, perfecting an experimental torpedo vessel which, upon its trial, proved a great success, and by direction of the Secretary of the Navy, five vessels were directed to be built after the plans developed. The first was sent to the fleet at the mouth of the Roanoke River in Albemarle Sound, and under the command of Lieutenant Cushing destroyed the iron-clad ram Albemarle, at Plymouth, North Carolina. Orders were then issued assigning Lieutenant Hamilton chief engineer to Major-General Hunt, afterwards the chief of artillery of the Army of the Potomac. That officer gave Hamilton a number of men with instructions to construct a fort upon the Neuse River, afterwards known as Fort Heckman, but, owing to the large number of men and government supplies at Washington, North Carolina, and the urgent necessity of completing the works at that point, Major-General Palmer, commanding the department, directed Lieutenant Hamilton to return there. On March 31, 1863, Major-General Foster arrived and ordered Lieutenant Hamilton to ascertain whether the Confederate forces of General Hill that he expected would soon attack the garrison had arrived with artillery at Red Hill, a Confederate outpost. In executing this order one captain and five privates of the Forty-fourth Massachusetts

Volunteers were wounded. The enemy had not then arrived in force, but did during the night and completely surrounded the town.

At daylight, April 1st, they commenced an attack upon one of our naval vessels, the Commodore Hull, which unfortunately was aground. Lieutenant Hamilton was ordered with two small rifle cannons to take position upon an exposed point on the river and endeavor to draw the enemy's fire away from the gunboat, which had been struck one hundred and four times and had all her guns dismounted. The enemy were so intent upon sinking this vessel that no attention was paid to the guns on shore until the gunboat, released from her position by the rising tide, started rapidly away. Then they turned their fourteen Whitworth guns against the two and kept up a constant fire until dark. General Foster directed Lieutenant Hamilton to construct a fort at this exposed point during the night, and have siege guns mounted. This was built and named Fort Hamilton, in honor of its commander. It bore a conspicuous part in that memorable siege that lasted twenty days.

Lieutenant Hamilton's health having become very much impaired, he returned north, during the draft riots, and took an active part in quelling the disturbances at Tarrytown, and after a much needed rest returned to the front. By advice of his physicians he resided for a considerable time after the close of the Rebellion in the thickly wooded pine tree sections of the south. The later years of his life have been spent in the neighborhood of his boyhood home. He has contributed many interesting historical sketches to the public press, and for the past few years has been engaged in gathering material for a history of Phillips Manor.

At 4:30 on the morning of September 6th, 1862, Lieutenant Hamilton became acquainted with a young lady of Washington, North Carolina, who had appealed to him, in the midst of a fierce hand-to-hand conflict, for protection, some of the opposing military forces, separated in the

heat of the battle from their comrades, without permission, having taken refuge upon her premises and in her dwelling. This brief acquaintance was rewarded a short time afterward when Lieutenant Hamilton appealed to the young lady to provide a home and shelter for an aged slave, he having been the trusted family servant of the leading Confederate of all that territory. This interview also procured the use of a warehouse, with forge and much needed temporary supply of coal, which contributed toward the construction of the experimental torpedo boat already mentioned, in order to bridge over the delay until charcoal kilns could be prepared and burned. These casual interviews principally of a formal business nature, were, however, destined to bring about a permanent acquaintance. Lieutenant Hamilton's duties were of an onerous character, requiring the use of three horses during the day and much mental labor until late at night. Being in frail health, he at length suddenly succumbed and was found in an unconscious state at his quarters. He was taken to the private house of a Union resident where he was nursed back to strength, one of his attendants being the lady already mentioned.

Invitations announcing the marriage of Miss Sarah F. Pugh to Lieutenant Hamilton on March 3rd, 1863, brought together at the bride's home a large number of army and naval officers, which the garrison supplemented by turning out in review and by giving them a national salute. This compliment the bride, however, was called upon to return before the close of the month, by working night and day in preparing cartridge bags, while shot and shell came crashing all about and through the very room she was employed in.

When the heat of the strife had subsided, preparations were made to visit the North, but scarcely had foot been set upon the soil of the Empire State before orders were



given to report for military duty in order to quell the riots then in progress. Here again cartridge bags had to be made and the military experience of the bride and groom gave the citizens of Tarrytown their first opportunity to witness the impromptu manufacture of some very dangerous ammunition, which fortunately did much toward quelling the riots.

## WYANDANCE, GRAND SACHEM OF LONG ISLAND.

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When the Europeans came to Long Island, the Indians, who had been greatly reduced in number, were divided, so far as we can learn, into thirteen distinct tribes. Each of these tribes had its sagamore or chief. At one time they were all united in a confederacy at the head of which was a powerful chief, the Grand Sachem of Paumanacke, or Sewanhacka. The Montauks were the ruling tribe.

Montauk was a place of distinction by the fact that it was a great burial place. The dead, particularly chiefs and warriors of note, were brought from all parts of the island to be buried there.

The Indian government was a monarchical despotism. In their person, they were tall, of proud and lofty movement, of active bodies, and as straight as an arrow. They were warlike in their habits. Their chiefs and their braves were distinguished above those of the other tribes of the island, for prowess in the field, for a recklessness of life in battle, and for the bold and daring onset with which, uttering their war scream, they rushed upon their enemy.

The chiefs of the Montauks were the grand sachems of the confederacy. The most distinguished of these was Wyandance. (The name Wyandance is derived from "wyan" wise; "dance," to speak out; as a whole, "The Wise Speaker.") He was always the unwavering friend of the whites. The New England Indians often sought to

involve him in a coalition against the new settlers, but he never yielded, and uniformly communicated their designs to Lion Gardiner, between whom and himself entire confidence and friendship existed.

Captain Lion Gardiner, as stated in his family Bible, came with his wife from London to New England in 1635, and dwelt for four years at Saybrook Fort at the mouth of the Connecticut River, he being in command of that fort. Here his son David and daughter Mary were born, the latter on August 30, 1638. Thereafter he purchased from the Indians an island called by them Manchonock (by the English, Isle of Wight), now known as Gardiner's Island, containing 3,500 acres of land, where another daughter was born on September 14, 1641. The price paid by Gardiner for the island was one large black dog, one gun, some powder and shot, some rum and a pair of blankets.

When Chief Ninigret and his Narragansett braves made an attack upon the Montauks, and carried away fourteen of their chief women, including the daughter of Wyandance, Captain Gardiner interested himself in the matter and had the women taken to the home of Richard Smith, at Wickford, now North Kingston, R. I., where the Indian princess remained until ransomed and restored to her father by Gardiner. The old chief in recognition of Captain Gardiner's kindness and services in the matter gave him a deed to a large tract of land where Smithtown is now located, a copy of which deed is as follows:

DEED.

East Hampton, July 14, 1659.

Bee it knowne unto all men, both English and Indians, especially the inhabitants of Long Island, that I, Wyandance, Sachem of Pamanack, with my wife and sonne Wyankanbone, my only sonne and heire, having deliberately how this twenty foure years wee have been not only acquainted with Lyon Gardiner, but from time to time have received much kindness from him, and from him not only, by councell and advice, in our prosperity, but in our extreimity, when we were almost swallowed up of our enemies, then wee say hee appeared to us, not only as a ffriend, but as a ffather, in giving us of his money and goods, whereby wee defended ourselves, and ran-

somed my Daughter and ffrriends. And wee say and know that by his means wee had great Comfort and relief, from the most Hon<sup>ble</sup> of the English Nation here about us. So that seeing wee yet live, and both of us being now old, and not that wee at any time have given him anything to gratify his Love, care and Charge, wee have nothing left that is worth his acceptance but a Small Tract of Land, w<sup>ch</sup> wee desire him to accept of for himselfe, his heires, Executors and assigns forever;

Now that it may be known how and where this Land lyeth on Long Island wee say it lyeth between Huntington and Seatancut the westernne Bounds being Cowharbour, easterly Actaamunk and southerly crosse ye Island to the end of ye great hollow or valley or more than half through the Island southerly, and that this is our free Act and Deed doth appear Our hand and Markes under written.

Signed, sealed and delivered in the presence of

RICHARD SMITH

THOMAS CHATFIELD

THOMAS TALMAGE

WYANDANCE X his mark

WYANKANBONE X his mark

THE SACHEM'S WIFE X her mark

All of the native tribes of the Island, as far as the Canaries' territory, were at one time tributary, in a greater or less degree, to Poggatacut, the elder brother of the Montaukett sachem, who resided on Shelter Island, as sachem over the Manhassett tribe, and as great sachem of all Long Island. In 1651, the Montaukett sachem, Wyandance, succeeded his brother, then deceased, as great sachem of Long Island, and had under him from ten to fifteen sachems, with whom his word was law, and over whom he exercised despotic sway.

Wyandance himself was tributary to the Pequots, a people residing on the shores of the Connecticut and Mystic rivers, more fierce, cruel and warlike than any of the tribes around them, and who at one time numbered four thousand able warriors. Their large canoes enabled them to transport across the sound any number of men, and their frequent visits to the island, overawed the tribes, and secured a continuance of their dominion.

At the first settlement by the whites, the Montauketts were yet numerous. They raised great quantities of corn

and vegetables; their woods were well stocked with animals and birds, and their bays and ponds with water fowl. Their canoes, in which they visited the neighboring islands and the continent, as far east as Boston, and as far south as New York, were of the largest class; and that of Wyandance, was so large as to require the strength of seven or eight men to draw it from the water upon the shore, and on one occasion it suffered injury from the waves at Gardiner's Island for want of a sufficient number of persons to place it beyond the reach of the sea.

In the year 1658, Wyandance, Sachem of Montaukett, plaintiff, prosecuted Jeremy Daily, defendant, for an injury done to his "great cannow." The case was tried by the "three men," and the Jury in the case rendered a verdict for the plaintiff, as appears by the record, viz:

January 25th, 1658.

Waiandanch, Sachem of Meantaquit, Plt., hath entered an action of damage against Jeremy Daily defendant.

Mr. Lion Gardiner testifieth that hee was at the Iland when my son and Goodman Daily came over, and I heard that the Great Cannow was coming, and I went Down to meet them, and made a noise for them that were in the house, to follow me, and I mett my sonn and Goodman Daily coming up, and I asked them whie they puled not up the canow, and they said it was time enough, and I called them to goe to gett it up, and we all went, and could do nothing, and then we went again, and she was full.

John Rose testifieth, that when the canow was brought into the South harbor, my Brother Anthony Waters and Goodman Daily, did mend the canow, by putting 2 pieces into the side of her and upon that account they were to have the use of her, when their time was out, to carrie over their things.

The verdict of the Jury—they find for the Plt. 10s. Damage, and court charges.

The Court charges is £1 1s 0d.

Town records, Book No. 2, p. 65.

The decease of the sachem Poggatacut was an important event with the Indians. His remains were transported for burial from Shelter Island to Montauk. In removing the body, the bearers rested the bier by the side of the road leading from Sag Harbor to Easthampton, near the three-mile stone, where a small excavation, afterwards known as

the "Sachem's Hole," was made to designate the spot where the head rested. From that time for more than one hundred and eighty years, this memorial remained as fresh, seemingly, as if but lately made. No leaf, nor stone, nor other thing, was suffered to remain in it. The Montaukett tribe, though reduced to a pitiful number of some ten or fifteen persons, retained for many years the memory of this event, and no individual of them passed the spot in his wanderings without removing whatever may have fallen into it. The place was to them holy ground, and the exhibition of this pious act does honor to the finest feelings of the human heart. The excavation was about twelve inches in depth and eighteen in diameter.

Wyandance, at one time, learning that Ninicraft was upon Block Island, proceeded there with a formidable force and arrived about midnight; when coming upon the Narragansetts he slaughtered about thirty, two of whom were personages of great note and one the nephew of the sachem. Subsequently, Ninicraft passed over to Montauk, burned the wigwams, sacked the barns, destroyed the corn fields, killed many of the principal warriors of the tribe and made captive fourteen women, among whom was the only daughter of Wyandance. The deep affliction of the father at the loss of his daughter can well be imagined, and the ardent affection which he maintained for his child was in part evidenced in the present he made upon her redemption.

In 1656, the Massachusetts Commissioners declined to render any further assistance to the Long Island Indians, and aid was for a short time given them by the colonies of Hartford and New Haven. Wyandance, in the same year, visited the Commissioners, at Boston, and in consideration of the distresses which had befallen him, obtained a remission of the tribute which had been exacted of him since the Pequot war. He was now left to contend alone against a vastly superior force, and the war was continued between the Narragansetts and Montauketts with great cruelty; but as

it was confined to the Indians, few of the events were known. Roger Williams refers the trouble between these tribes to the pride of the rival sachems: "He of Montaukett was proud and foolish,—he of Narragansett was proud and fierce."

Upon arrival of Governor Kieft, in 1638, to take charge of the Dutch settlement at New Amsterdam, it was found that the settlers under two former governors had been in an impoverished condition, and on account of their pitiable state, the Indians had shown them great kindness, had taken some to their wigwams, had supplied corn, maize, dried clams, etc., and taught them to sew furs and make moccasins, and had given them their daughters for companions, some of whom had borne children.

The Dutch, under Kieft, had, in 1638, set up the Royal Standard on a tree at Cow Bay to mark their boundary. This was removed by some English from Connecticut and a fool's face substituted. This provoked the Dutch, and in the fight which followed several Indians were killed, which so exasperated the Indians that they resolved to annihilate the Dutch on Manhattan Island, and word was sent out to the tribes to assemble all warriors, canoes and boats at Canarsie for that purpose. Governor Kieft, learning of this, sent two commissioners to see them. During the conference one of the chiefs described the early friendly relations existing, as already stated, and further said that the Dutch by killing the Indians were destroying their own offspring and for that reason they had resolved to exterminate the entire settlement, which they came very near doing in 1649.

Wyandance died in 1659, leaving a wife, Wuch-i-kit-tau-but, and two children, one a son named Weon-com-bone, and a daughter, Catoneras, wife of Jan Cornelius Van Texsel. It was that daughter that Lion Gardiner had ransomed from captivity.



He appointed Lion Gardiner and his son, David Gardiner, to be the guardians of his son Weon-com-bone, as appears from a deed dated February 11, A. D. 1661, a copy of which is as follows:

COPY DEED OF 1661.

Be it knowne unto all men by these presents, that I, the Sunk Squa of Meantuck, wife of Wiandanch, of late years Deceased, and also I Wionkombone, Sonne of the foresaid Deceased partie, Sachem of Long Island, together with Pokkatonn, Chief Counsellor, and the rest of our trusty Counsellors and associates, send greeting. Know ye, that Whereas there was a full and firm Indenture made between Mr. Thomas Baker, Mr. Robert Bond, Mr. Thomas James, Mr. Lion Gardiner, Mr. John Mulford, John Hand, Benjamin Price, Together with their associates, the Inhabitants of Easthampton upon Long Island, ye one partie, and I sunk Squa, and also me Wionkombone, with the full Consent of my Counsellors and Servants, as also of my two Guardians, left by my deceased Father, viz: Mr. Lion Gardiner of Easthampton, and Mr. David Gardiner, of ye Isle of wight, ye other partie, in ye years of or Lord One Thousand Six Hundred Sixtie, upon ye sixt day of August, whereby we did fully and firmly sell unto the said parties, our neck of land called Montaukut, from sea to sea, from ye utmost end of that neck Eastward called wompenanit, to our utmost bounds westward, Called Napeale, with all priviledges and appurtenances belonging to the same, upon Condition there and then specified in that foresaid Indenture, and a Counterbond, bearing ye same Date, signed and sealed to us by ye foresaid parties, Inhabitants of East-Hampton, by virtue of which Counterbond we had free libertie granted if wee see cause to sit down again upon ye said land, this being the full purpose of us the Sunk Squa, of Wionkombone, Sachem, together with our associates in Convenient time to sit down to live at ye said Montaukut; know yee allsoe, that whereas of late years, there having beene sore Distress and Calamities befallen us by reason of ye Cruel opposition and Violence of or most Deadly Enemies Ninnicraft, Sachem of Narhigganset, whose Cruelty hath proceeded so farr as to take away ye lives of many of or Deare friends and relations, soe that we were forced to flie from ye said Montouquit for shelter to our beloved friends and neighbors of Easthampton, whom wee found to be friendly in our distress, and whom wee must ever owne and acknowledge as instruments under God, for ye preservation of or lives and ye lives of our Wives and Children to this Day, and of that Land of Montakut from ye hands of or Enemies, and since or Coming amongst them ye relieving of us in or Extremities from time to time; and now at last wee find ye said Inhabitants of Easthampton, our Deliverers, Cordial, and faithfull in their former Covenants, leaving us freely to or own libertie to go or stay, being ready to perform all conditions of of ye foresaid agreem't. After serious debate and deliberation, in Consideration of that love which we have and doe bear, unto these our trustie and beloved friends of Easthampton, upon our owne free and Voluntarie motion, have given and granted, and by these presents do give and grant and



Confirme unto these our friends, ye Inhabitants of Easthampton, Excepting such as have Exempted themselves from ye former agreement; and shall from this our grant, all that piece or neck of land belonging to Montakut Land, westward to a fresh pond in a beach on this side, Westward to that place where the old Indian fort stooode on ye other side, Eastward to ye new fort that is yet standing; the name of ye pond being Quanuntowunk on ye North and konkhonganik on ye south, together with all priviledges and appurtenances belonging to the foresaid land from south to north, To have and to hold ye same at free Commonage, to be ordered and disposed of for the benefit of ye aforesaid Inhabitants of East-Hampton, themselves, their heirs, administrators, Executors and assigns forever; to possess the same freely and quietly, without any matter of Challenge clayme or demand of us, ye said Sunk Squa and Wionkombone Sachem, or our associates, or of any other person or persons whatsoever, for us or in our name, or for our cause, means or procurement. And without any money or other things therefor to be yielded, paid or done only for ye said Land, to us or our heires forever, and shall Justifie the possession of this foresaid Land, by these said Inhabitants of Easthampton, against any shall Questin their propertie in the same. Know ye allso, yt this is not only the Deed of mee, ye Sunk Squa, and Wionkombone Sachem, but allso the act and Deed of all our associates and subjects, who have hadd formerly any propertie in ye foresaid Land they having manyfested their consent freely by a Voate, not one contradicting the same, as allsoe with ye consent of Mr. Lion Gardiner and Mr. David Gardiner, Whome the Deceased Father left as Overseers and Guardians of the aforesaid Wiankombone Sachem; know yee also yt for ye securing of ye Easterne part of Montaukut Land, which ye Indians are to live upon, yt the Inhabitants of ye foresaid Easthampton shall from time to time, keep up a sufficient fence upon ye North side of ye foresaid pond, and the Indians are to secure ye south side of ye foresaid pond, from all cattle, Dureing ye time their Corn is upon the ground. And then Easthampton Cattle shall have Libertie Eastward, according to former agreement; and that ye Indians of Montaukut shall have libertie if they see cause to sett their Houses upon Meantauk land, Westward of ye said pond, and to have firewood from time to time, on ye foresaid land. Know also, that whatever Connoe or Deer shall come a shore on ye North side on any part of Meantauk Land, Easthampton Inhabitants shall not hinder ye Sachem of them. And Whereas ye deceased Sachem in his life, freely gave to Mr. Lion Gardiner, and Mr. Thomas James what Whales should at any time be cast upon Meantauk Land, as allso confirmed by me, Sunk Squa and Wionkombone Sachem since, and ye rest of our associates, which not being minded when former agreement was made, I, Sunk Squa, and allso I, Wiankombone Sachem, together with our associates, doe freely give to ye said Lion Gardiner and Thomas James, to be Equally divided between them, the first Whale shall be cast upon Montauket, to them and their heirs or assigns forever, wee give ye one halfe of all such Whales as shall be cast upon Montakut land, and the other half to be Divided as the said Inhabitants of Easthampton stand Engaged to us for as the said Inhabitants of Easthampton stand Engages to us for pay for that land Eastward of ye foresaid pond, soe wee allso stand

Engaged, neither Directly nor indirectly, to give, let or sell any part of that land, without consent of Easthampton. Know yee also, yt if at any time hereafter, if Either through sickness or warr, or any other means, it shall come to pass yt ye Indians belongin to Montakut be taken away, soe yt it shall not bee safe for them to Continue there, that then those that survive shall have libertie to come to Easthampton for shelter, and be there provided of land, and to have the former agreement fulfilled, and to remaine as firme and sure, as though there never had been any such act or Deed as here is specified, and that duringe the time of the Indians abode at Montakut, they shall be careful of doing any wrong to the English either by their owne persons or doggs, or any other way whatsoever. In Witness of ye premises wee do here set to our hands. Dated att Easthampton, Feb. 11, Anno. Dom. 1661.

Signed by the marks of the "Sunk Squa," "Wiankombone Sachem," and nine other Indians, in behalf of the rest.

Sealed, Signed and Delivered in presence of us,

EDWARD CODNER,  
WILLIAM MILLER.

Wyandance admitted no equal in the government of his people, but stood alone chief of the tribe. While he exercised the sovereignty as great sachem of Long Island, though he suffered most severely in the wars with the Narragansetts, his proud, independent spirit would yield to no terms derogatory to the prowess of his nation. In his death, the English lost a warm and devoted friend. His attachment for the whites, though he sometimes suffered from them great provocation, never wavered, and the commanding influence which he possessed over the Indian tribes of the island was ever exercised to prevent any hostile movements against them.

## THE HAWLEY FAMILY.

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The *New England Historical and Genealogical Register*, Vol. XXXIII, April, 1879, contains an address by a Mr. Selden, made at Saybrook, Connecticut, on the 22d of August, 1877, at a re-union of the Selden family, presided over by Honorable Morrison R. Waite, Chief Justice of the United States, whose mother was Maria Selden Waite. Mr. Selden had a few spirited, if uncomplimentary, words to say concerning the Hawleys, to wit:

"The Hawleys, I regret to say, as appears from the 'Roll of Battle Abbey', came to England from Normandy with that wretched filibustering crew, led by William the Conqueror, in 1066. A worse set of scoundrels never robbed a nation, or spoiled half so ruthlessly. Wholesale pillagers! Gigantic bummers!"

Life in England seemed to improve the Normans. At least the Hawleys grew in grace, and one of them, Joseph Hawley, born about 1600, came to America from Derbyshire in 1639, and established his home in Connecticut. He married Katherine Birdsey in 1646 and begat sons and daughters.

The record of this family, in so far as the Romer family is concerned, is as follows:

Joseph Hawley.

Samuel Hawley, first child of Joseph.

Born, 1647.

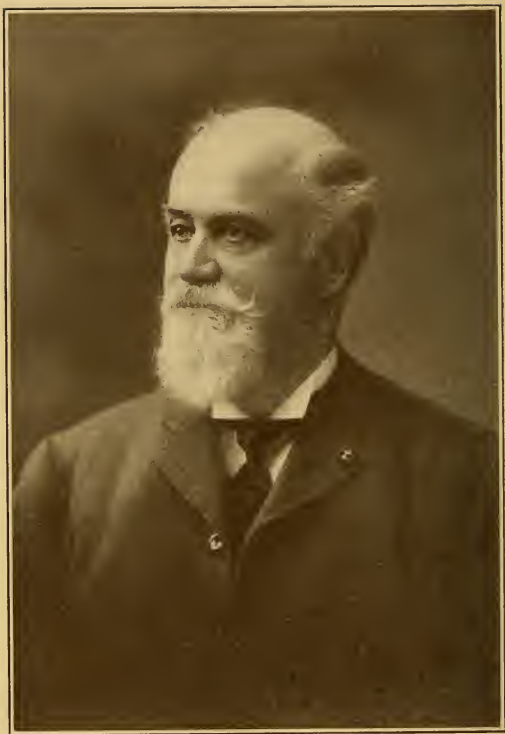
Married, May 20, 1673, to Mary Thompson.

Married 2d, to Patience Hubbell, (widow).

- Ephraim Hawley, eighth child of Samuel, Sen.  
Born, 1692.  
Married, 5th Oct., 1711, to Sarah Curtiss.
- Josiah Hawley, eighth child of Ephraim.  
Born, 1731.  
Married, 8th Feb., 1753, to Hannah Warner.
- Lemuel Hawley, fifth child of Josiah.
- Minerva Hawley, first child of Lemuel.  
Married Luther Lockwood, a lieutenant in American Army in War of 1812.
- Caroline C. Lockwood, St. Albans, Vt.; second child of Lieut. Luther Lockwood and Minerva Hawley, his wife.  
Born, May 8, 1811.  
Married, March 27, 1845, to Alexander Romer.  
Died, August 28, 1894.
- John Lockwood Romer, lawyer, Buffalo, N. Y., first child of Alexander Romer and Caroline C. Lockwood, his wife.  
Born, December 16, 1845.  
Married, January 25, 1872, to Katherine M. Taylor.
- Carrie E. Romer, Buffalo, N. Y., third child of Alexander Romer and Caroline C. Lockwood, his wife.  
Born, May 9, 1854.  
Married, February 4, 1876 to Millard F. Windsor.  
Died, July 3, 1906.
- Ray Taylor Romer, Buffalo, N. Y., first child of John L. Romer and Katherine Taylor Romer, his wife.  
Born, October 10, 1874.
- Florence E. Romer, Buffalo, N. Y.; second child of John L. Romer and Katherine Taylor Romer, his wife.  
Born, Dec. 21, 1876.  
Married, Nov. 8, 1899, to Rev. Charles C. Albertson, D. D.
- Mabel Romer, Buffalo, N. Y., third child of John L. Romer and Katherine Taylor Romer, his wife.  
Born, November 20, 1881.  
Married, Sept. 5, 1907, to Harold H. Baker, M. D.
- Katherine Romer Albertson, Germantown, first child of Charles C. Albertson and Florence E. Romer, his wife.  
Born, October 26, 1900.
- John Simeon Baker, son of Harold H. Baker and Mabel Romer Baker, his wife.  
Born, August 20, 1916.
- Mildred Windsor, Buffalo, N. Y., fourth child of Millard F. Windsor and Carrie E. Romer, his wife.  
Born, January 4, 1884.
- Ellen Josephine Windsor, Buffalo, fifth child of Millard F. Windsor and Carrie E. Romer, his wife.  
Born, October 20, 1890.



Taylor



VIRGIL CORYDON TAYLOR

## THE TAYLOR FAMILY.

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The Taylors, as well as the Hawleys, came into England with the Normans under the guidance of William the Conqueror in 1066.

Taillefer was the original form of this name, but simplified spelling has cut out letters here and there and changed others. An old tradition is to the effect that one of Williams' Knights was the bold Norman baron Taillefer, who, before the battle of Hastings, was so enthusiastic at the prospect of a fight that he threw up his sword, catching it again on its downward course,

"Chanting aloud the lusty strain  
Of Roland and of Charlemagne."

He lost his life in this battle, and it is said that William the Conqueror himself in acknowledgment of the baron's prowess bestowed, as the hero was dying, the motto which appears on the Taylor coat of arms, "Drink to Taillefer, boys, his heirs shall have a whole county, fee-simple deeded, and a motto—*Consiquitur quodcunque petit*—(he accomplishes what he undertakes). In fulfillment of this promise large estates in Kent and other counties were granted to his family.

The Connecticut branch of the family is descended from William Taylor, who was born in Clitheroe, County Lancaster, England, in 1609, son of Thomas Taylor of Clitheroe. He was baptized at Saint George's, Canterbury, left Gravesend, in the "Expedition," November 20, 1635. January 2nd,

1649, he received a grant of land at Wethersfield, Connecticut, where he appeared prior to 1647. He is in the list of Freemen in Wethersfield in 1669. He married, about 1648, Mary —, and had descendants as follows:

- John**     b. July 23, 1649.  
            m. March 2, 1698/9 Sarah (Hart) Scone, daughter of Edmund Hart of Dorchester and widow of John Scone, d. Westfield, August 19, 1684.
- Samuel**   b. March 2, 1651.   d. December 12, 1711.  
            m. April 10, 1678, Sarah (Cole) Persons, daughter of Henry Cole and wid. John Persons.
- Mary**     b. March 7, 1654/5.
- William**   b. February 14, 1659.  
            m. Dec. 18, 1693, Elizabeth Biggs, daughter of William of Middletown.
- Margaret** b. July 15, 1663.
- Jonathan** b. April 6, 1666.

### III. SAMUEL TAYLOR.

- b. Wethersfield, Ct., Mch. 2, 1651.  
            d. Dec. 12, 1711.  
            m. Wethersfield, Apr. 10, 1678.

- SARAH (COLE) PERSONS** b. Middletown, Ct., Oct. 22, 1654.  
                               d. Dec. 9, 1712.

#### *Children, b. Wethersfield:*

- Samuel**   b. May 10, 1679.
- Sarah**    b. Oct. 20, 1680.
- William**   b. Nov. 16, 1683.
- Mary**     b. Aug. 20, 1685.  
            m. Dec. 28, 1707, Enoch Buck.
- John**     b. Feb. 1, 1688; d. Haddam, July 13, 1761.  
            m. 1st, Jan. 15, 1711/2, Elizabeth Bailey; d. June 6, 1743; daughter of John.  
            2nd, Anne; d. June 27, 1759, age 62.
- Margaret** b. March 3, 1693.
- Mabel**    b. Jan. 26, 1695.

### IV. JOHN TAYLOR.

- b. Wethersfield, Ct., Feb. 1, 1688.  
            d. Haddam, July 13, 1761.  
            m. 1st Jan. 15, 1711/12.

- ELIZABETH BAILEY**     b. Haddam, Oct. 24, 1694.  
                               d. June 6, 1743, aged 49.

#### *Children, first three b. Wethersfield, last nine in Middletown:*

- Samuel**   b. Nov. 8, 1712.  
            m. Middletown, June 15, 1735, Mary Bevin, dau.



Thomas (?)

- Elisha     b.   March 3, 1715.  
              m.   Middletown, Sept. 20, 1739, Hannah Judd, daughter  
                      Jonathan.
- Sarah       b.   April 27, 1716.  
              m.   (—) Francis.
- Noadiah    b.  
              m.   Middletown, Oct. 24, 1739, Abigail Whitmore.
- Kesiah      b.   Aug. 1, 1720.  
              m.   Middletown, June 21, 1744, Ezra Andrews (?)
- William    b.   Sept. 2, 1722. d. 1777.  
              m.   1st, Middletown, Sept. 25, 1747, Susanna Freeman.  
                      d. Middletown, Oct. 12, 1750, age 26.  
                      2nd, Middletown, Nov. 16, 1750, Ruth (Rich) Hig-  
                      gins, daughter of Thomas Rich.
- John        d.   April 17, 1724.
- Elizabeth   b.   Dec. 22, 1725.  
              m.   Middletown, Feb. 1, 1753, George Stephens.
- Daniel      b.   Oct. 27, 1727.
- Joshua      b.   Feb. 14, 1728/9.
- Benajah    b.   Feb. 9, 1730/1.
- Justus      b.   Dec. 12, 1734; d. Sept. 24, 1771.  
              m.   Boston, Oct. 20, 1762, Elizabeth Blake of Boston.
- Hester      b.  
              m.   Middletown, Jan. 29, 1756, Thomas Snow.

#### V. WILLIAM TAYLOR.

- b.   Middletown, Sept. 2, 1722.  
                      d.   1777.  
                      m.   2nd, Middletown, Nov. 16, 1750.
- RUTH (RICH) HIGGINS b.   Eastham, 1722.  
                              d.   Barkhamsted, Ct., June 1, 1813, age 91.  
                      (She was the daughter of Mercy Knowles and widow of  
                      Dea. Daniel Higgins, of Middletown, who died Oct., 1749, who  
                      married her Oct. 27, 1743, in Eastham, Mass.)

#### *Children:*

- John        b.   Middletown, June 22, 1748.
- Mary        b.
- Susannah   b.
- Mercy       b.
- William    b.   New Hartford, Ct., July 13, 1757; d. 1835, aged 78.  
              m.   May 11, 1782, Abigail Case, dau. Daniel, Jr.
- Ozias       b.   New Hartford, Mch. 19, 1760; d. 1814.  
              m.   Amelia Humphrey.
- Ruth        b.   Simsbury, Dec. 6, 1762.

- David**    b. Simsbury, July 7, 1764; d. 1840.  
           m. 1st, Lucina Roberts; d. 1816.  
               2nd, Marlow Johnson.
- Isaiah**    b. Simsbury, June 27, 1768; d. 1811.  
           m. Zilpah Case, dau. of Uriah.

# VI. WILLIAM TAYLOR, JR.

- b. N. Hartford, July 13, 1757.  
           d. Barkhamsted, Mch. 23, 1835.  
           m. May 11, 1782.

- ABIGAIL CASE**            b. Canton, Ct., Jan. 8, 1758.  
                                   d. Barkhamsted, June 20, 1830.

He served in the Revolutionary War from 1775 to June 10, 1783, when he was honorably discharged and then settled in Barkhamsted.

His will of Aug. 10, 1827, and codicil of Oct. 3, 1835, probated Barkhamsted, Sept. 20, 1836, names wife Abigail, daughters Emma, Abba and Camilla; sons Virgil, Hector and William, and granddaughters Eliza and Nancy Taylor.

## *Children, b. Simsbury:*

- William**    b. May 15, 1785, rem. to Jefferson, N. Y., 1814 (?) d. Stamford, N. Y., Oct. 19, 1861.  
           m. 1st, Sept. 22, 1807, Nancy Wickham of Canton, Ct.  
               d. June 2, 1812.  
               2nd, Stamford, N. Y., Oct. 12, 1815, Nancy Rickey.  
               d. Oct. 9, 1844, age 54, dau. Thomas.  
               3rd, Stamford, N. Y., Sept. 15, 1850, Eunice Mallison, d. Nov. 12, 1882, age 76, dau. of Roswell.
- Abigail**    b. Mch. 19, 1787; d. Middletown, Oct. 3, 1855.  
           m. Mch. 9, 1812, Nathaniel Bacon.
- Camilla**    b. Nov. 27, 1788; d. Jan. 29, 1870; buried Harpersfield Centre, N. Y.  
           m. Dec. 31, 1807, Phineas Stratton; d. Aug. 29, 1868, age 82.
- Virgil**     b. Dec. 10, 1790; d. Dec. 16, 1861.  
           m. Barkhamsted, Sept. 2, 1812, Electa Gilbert, daughter of Asa of Hartford.
- George**    b. June 25, 1793; killed by a tree Nov. 11, 1804.
- Steuben**    b. June 2, 1795; d. unmarried, Barkhamsted, Oct. 22, 1824. (Brown, 1819).
- Emma**      b. March 22, 1797. d. July 10, 1886.  
           m. Barkhamsted, Oct. 20, 1831, Evits Carter, son Noah.
- Hector**    b. April 7, 1799; d. Cleveland, O., Nov. 17, 1874.  
           m. Sept. 4, 1822, Polly Carter, dau. Noah.

GENEALOGY OF THE TAYLOR FAMILY IN DESCENT FROM  
ELDER WILLIAM BREWSTER

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William Brewster was born in Scrooby, England, in 1560. He immigrated to America in 1620, being one of the company of Pilgrims who came over in the "Mayflower." He drafted the compact which forty-one of the Pilgrims signed on the 21st day of November, 1620, in the cabin of the "Mayflower", before landing, the purpose of which, it is recited, was "For our better ordering and preservation and furtherance of the ends aforesaid, and by virtue thereof, to enact, constitute and frame (laws) unto which we promise all due submission and obedience." This document is accounted the earliest written constitution in history. Elder Brewster was one of the prominent founders of Plymouth Colony, and is regarded by many as pre-éminently the leader of the Pilgrims. He married Mary —, who died in Plymouth in 1627. Elder Brewster himself died at Plymouth, Massachusetts, April 16, 1644.

*GENERATION I.*

PATIENCE BREWSTER: Daughter of William Brewster; married Thomas Prince, who was born in England in 1601; died in Plymouth, Massachusetts, March 29, 1673. He was Governor of the Colony of Plymouth in 1637-1638 and 1657-1673; Member of Council of War, and Commissioner of the United Colonies. He came over in the "Fortune" in 1621.

*GENERATION II.*

MERCY PRINCE: Daughter of Patience Brewster Prince; married the 14th day of February, 1649, Major John Freeman, who was born in England in 1627; died in Massachusetts, 1718. He was a captain in King Philip's War in 1675; Deputy to General Court in 1685; and First Judge of the Court of Common Pleas after the union of Plymouth with Massachusetts. He came over in the "Abigail" in 1635.

*GENERATION III.*

MERCY FREEMAN: Daughter of Mercy Prince Freeman; born July, 1659; married Samuel Knowles, of Eastham, December, 1679.

*GENERATION IV.*

MERCY KNOWLES: Daughter of Mercy Freeman Knowles; born September 13, 1681; married Thomas Rich of Eastham, July 23, 1701.

*GENERATION V.*

RUTH RICH: Daughter of Mercy Knowles Rich; born in Eastham, 1722; died in Barkhamsted, Connecticut, 1813; married, first, Deacon Daniel Higgins, October 27, 1743, and married, second, William Taylor, November 16, 1750.

*GENERATION VI.*

WILLIAM TAYLOR, JUNIOR: Son of William and Ruth Rich Higgins Taylor; born 1757; married Abigail Case; died March 23, 1835.

*GENERATION VII.*

HECTOR TAYLOR: Son of William Taylor, Jr., and Abigail Case; born April 7, 1799; married Polly Carter, daughter of Noah Carter, September 4, 1822; died November 17, 1874.

EMMA TAYLOR: Daughter of William Taylor, Jr., and Abigail Case; born March 22, 1797; married Evits Carter, son of Noah Carter, October 20, 1831.

*GENERATION VIII.*

Children of Hector and Polly Carter Taylor:

(a) VIRGIL CORYDON TAYLOR: Born August 4, 1838; married Margaret M. Sackett, June 23, 1863.

(b) ANN TAYLOR: Born November 9, 1834; married Andrew J. Foster, January 29, 1860; died June 23, 1906, without issue surviving.

(c) KATHERINE M. TAYLOR: Born January 17, 1845; married John L. Romer, January 25, 1872; died July 16, 1915.

*GENERATION IX.*

(a) Children of Virgil Corydon Taylor and Margaret Sackett Taylor.

HARRIET E. TAYLOR: Born December 25, 1864; married Doctor Frank E. Bunts, October 29, 1888.

KATHERINE TAYLOR: Born February 3, 1866; married, first, L. Dudley Dodge, September 19, 1888; married, second, Richard O. Carter, November 21, 1904.

GRACE M. TAYLOR: Born September 6, 1872; married John B. Cochran, October 26, 1892.

ALEXANDER S. TAYLOR: Born April 3, 1869; married Clara F. Law, May 16, 1894.

(b) Children of John L. and Katherine Taylor Romer:

RAY TAYLOR ROMER: Born October 10, 1874.

FLORENCE E. ROMER: Born December 21, 1876; married Reverend Charles C. Albertson, D.D., November 8, 1899.

MABEL ROMER: Born November 20, 1881; married Harold H. Baker, M.D., September 5, 1907.



HECTOR TAYLOR AND POLLY CARTER HIS WIFE



ANN TAYLOR FOSTER

*GENERATION X.*

(a) KATHERINE R. ALBERTSON: Daughter of Reverend Charles C. Albertson and Florence Romer Albertson; born October 26, 1900.

(b) JOHN SIMEON BAKER: Son of Harold H. and Mabel Romer Baker, born August 20, 1916.

(c) MARGARET DODGE: Daughter of L. Dudley Dodge and Katherine Taylor, his wife; born September 2, 1839; married Levi A. Johnson, October 24, 1911.

(d) WILSON DODGE: Son of L. Dudley Dodge and Katherine Taylor Dodge; born March 16, 1898.

(e) CLARA T. BUNTS: Daughter of Doctor Frank E. and Harriet Taylor Bunts; born March 9, 1890; married Edward C. Dauost, April 24, 1912.

(f) ALEXANDER T. BUNTS: Son of Doctor Frank and Harriet Taylor Bunts; born March 9, 1897.

(g) VIRGIL CORYDON TAYLOR: Son of Alexander and Clara Law Taylor; born December 16, 1895.

(h) HARRIET T. COCHRAN: Daughter of John B. and Grace Taylor Cochran; born October 16, 1895.

*GENERATION XI.*

(a) FRANCES B. DAUOST: Daughter of Edward C. and Clara Bunts Dauost; born February 12, 1913.

(b) EDWARD B. DAUOST: Son of Edward C. and Clara Bunts Dauost; born July 11, 1915.

(c) CLARK JOHNSON: Son of Levi A. and Margaret Dodge Johnson; born January 29, 1913.

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A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF WILLIAM TAYLOR, JR.,  
IN THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION.

When the first news reached him that "the shot heard around the world" had been fired by the "embattled farmers," at Lexington, he, then scarcely eighteen years old, enlisted as a private in the company of Captain Amos Willcox, of Simsbury, Connecticut, in what was known as the Lexington Alarm, about April 21, 1775; but as there were more troops than the colony could then equip for service, they were discharged at the end of three days.

Arrangements for the equipment of the troops having been meanwhile effected, he enlisted again as a private in

Captain Abel Pettibone's company, Second Continental Regiment, and served from May 5, 1775, to December 18, following. The various companies did not wait to be formed into a regiment, but marched to Lexington separately. The regiment was in or about Boston at the time of the battle of Bunker Hill, portions of it participating in that engagement.

After the battle of White Plains, in October, 1776, he enlisted as a private for the third time in Captain Ozias Marvin's company, Ninth Militia Regiment, General Wooster's brigade, and served from October 24th to December 25th, along the Westchester County border.

On January 10, 1777, he enlisted as a private for the fourth time, for the term of the war, in Capt. Walbridge's company, Colonel Charles Webb's regiment, in the "Continental Line"; but on the army roll he was reported and paid as sergeant from February 10, 1777, to January 1, 1780. He served during the following summer and fall along the Hudson River, under the command of General Israel Putnam.

On November 14, 1777, the regiment was ordered to join General Washington's army, in Pennsylvania, and on December 8, was engaged in the sharp action at Red Bank, where a number of its officers and men were killed and wounded. He wintered at Valley Forge, 1777-78, and fought June 28, following, in the battle of Monmouth. He was afterwards assigned to the Second Connecticut Brigade, General Huntington, at White Plains, and wintered 1778-79 with the division at Red Bank. He served on the east side of the Hudson with General Heath's wing, during the operations of 1779, and was engaged under General Anthony Wayne in the storming of Red Bank, July 15, 1779, wintering 1779-80 at Morristown, where he served on the outposts. His name was borne on the muster rolls of the army up to and including December, 1780, but the records, which were incomplete, do not show the nature and extent of his services between that time and December, 1782. In



January, 1783, he was commissioned as sergeant in the Third Connecticut Regiment, Colonel Samuel B. Webb, to rank as such from April 1, 1780. He was honorably discharged June 10, 1783.

Upon the passage of the Act authorizing the payment of pensions to Revolutionary soldiers who had rendered gallant and meritorious services in the war, he made application for a pension, April 6, 1819, which was allowed from May 25th of that year at the rate of \$8 per month, and it was paid at the Connecticut agency. His residence at the time of making his application was Barkhamsted, Connecticut, whence he had removed from Simsbury shortly after the war, and where he died March 23, 1835, at the age of seventy-eight years.

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#### DEATH OF HECTOR TAYLOR.

On yesterday morning, in the seventy-sixth year of his age, Hector Taylor died at the residence of his daughter, Mrs. A. J. Foster, No. 262 Prospect Street, and the funeral occurs at 11 A. M. on next Friday.

The deceased was born April 7, 1799, in Canton, Hartford County, Connecticut, and was married September 4, 1822, to Miss Polly Carter, with whom he spent forty-three years of happy married life. Three children were born unto them, all of whom are living. An adopted daughter is also living and now residing in Illinois. Mr. Taylor removed from Connecticut to Ohio in 1832, and settled in Twinsburg, Summit County. He was for fifty-eight years an active business man, ever foremost in all movements of a progressive nature calculated to advance the interests and well-being of those around him and the community in which he lived. He was a man of peculiarly broad and benevolent character, ready to do good, and in the long years of a varied and eventful life he maintained a strictly Christian character. For fifty-four years he has preserved an active church membership, being a member at the time of his decease of the East Cleveland Congregational Church.

In the years 1837-8, Mr. Taylor lived in what is now a portion of this city known as East Madison Avenue, then a sparsely settled district, the now prosperous city of Cleveland being then a mere village. His wife dying in 1867, he again removed to this city, and making it his permanent home, resided with a son and daughter.

During eight months of illness, an illness of a peculiarly aggravated and distressing character, no word of complaint or repining ever passed his lips. He endured to the end and has gone to his eternal reward.—*Cleveland Leader*, Nov. 18, 1874.

## MRS. JOHN L. ROMER.

Katherine Taylor, daughter of Hector and Polly Carter Taylor, was born in Twinsburg, O., January 17, 1845, and died in Buffalo, N. Y., July 16, 1915.

She was married January 25, 1872, to Mr. John Lockwood Romer, who, with three children, Mrs. Charles C. Albertson, of Brooklyn; Mrs. Harold H. Baker, of Rochester, N. Y.; and Ray T. Romer, of Lancaster, N. Y., and one brother, Virgil C. Taylor, of Cleveland, survive her.

Mrs. Romer came of New England ancestry, her father, Hector Taylor, being descended in the seventh generation from Elder William Brewster, of the Mayflower company. Her parents moved from Barkhamsted, Conn., to the Western Reserve in 1826. In her young womanhood she became a member of the Euclid Avenue Presbyterian Church of Cleveland, but since 1886, when Mr. and Mrs. Romer became residents of Buffalo, she had been identified with the Delaware Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church of that city. She was an active worker in the women's societies of the congregation, and during the years of Mr. Romer's superintendency of the Bible School and presidency of the Methodist Union, dispensed hospitality with dignity and grace. Her pastors and their families, and those of the resident bishops in Buffalo, have reason to remember her courtesy and thoughtfulness.

For fifteen years Mrs. Romer had been in such precarious health as to forbid her attendance at the services of the church. The last two years were marked with keen suffering. Yet she was not without comfort in the faith that "through the close bars of pain that shut us from our kind, God stoopeth down to make us one with Him." Physicians, nurses and friends who watched her as her path dipped low and long toward the valley of shadow all bear witness to the rare and saintly qualities of her character. Radiant in girlhood; beautiful in young womanhood; winsome in maturity; patient when pain's furnace fires were kindled, her life was rich with love and grace.

The funeral services were held at the family residence on Linwood Avenue, Buffalo, Sunday afternoon, July 18, and were conducted by her pastor, Dr. Philip Frick, and C. C. Albertson. Burial was in Forest Lawn.—*New York Christian Advocate*.





FOREST LAWN CEMETERY

## THE CARTER FAMILY.

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The founder of the New England branch of the Carter family was Robert Carter, who died November 6th, 1751, at Killingworth, Conn. His children were Benjamin, William, John, Samuel, Mary, Nathaniel and Joseph.

William was born at Killingworth, Conn., and on May 8th, 1773, married Ann Yale, daughter of Captain Theophilus Yale. Of this marriage there was born one son, Thaddeus, on April 8th, 1735, who married Lucy Andrews.

This son Thaddeus had one son, Noah Andrews Carter, born at Wallingford, Conn., in 1777, who in 1798 married Lydia Gaylord.

The children of this marriage were: Chloe, born October 22, 1799, who married Asa Upton; Thaddeus Andrews, born March 24, 1802, who married, first, Esther Marshall, May 12, 1828, and second, Margaret McKisson, Dec. 29, 1845; Polly, born August 24, 1804, who married Hector Taylor, Sept. 4, 1822; Evits, born Dec. 24, 1806, who married Emma Taylor; Hiram, born January 24, 1810, who married Eliza Taylor; Joseph Henry, born November 1st, 1812; married Nancy Taylor; Caroline, born May 22, 1815; married Edwin Richardson.

Ruth Rich, a descendant of Elder William Brewster, married, first, Deacon Daniel Higgins, and after his death, November 16, 1750, married William Taylor.

GENERATION VI. William Taylor, Jr., son of William Taylor and Ruth Rich Higgins his wife, was born July 13, 1757, in New Hartford, Conn.; married May 11, 1782, Abigail Case, born January 8, 1758, Canton, Conn. He died March 23, 1835, she June 20, 1830, Barkhamstead.

GENERATION VII. Emma Taylor, born March 22, 1797, died July 10, 1886; married October 20, 1831, Evits Carter, born December 24, 1806; died February 17, 1887.

GENERATION VIII. Walter S. Carter, born February 24, 1833, married, first, October 8, 1855, Marie Antoinette Smith, born January 25, 1836, died January 2, 1865, and (third) December 1, 1870, Harriet Cook, born December 4, 1848.

GENERATION IX. Colin Smith Carter, Emma Carter Dickinson, Antoinette Carter Hughes, Walter Frederick Carter, Leslie Taylor Carter.

GENERATION X. Howard Dickinson, Burgess Dickinson, Edwin Dickinson, Antoinette Dickinson, Charles Evans Hughes, Helen Hughes, Colin Esterbrook Carter, Philip Van Gelder Carter.

Evits Carter, who married Emma Taylor, had two children—Walter S. Carter and Chloe Carter Lee.

Walter S. Carter's children and grand-children are named under above titles, Generation IX and Generation X.

The children of Chloe Carter Lee are Gerald Lee, Christabel Lee, Grace Lee and Theodore Lee.

Caroline Carter Richardson, wife of Edwin Richardson, had six children, viz.: Julian Richardson, Carrie Richardson Mooney, Rose Richardson Murfey and Daniel Richardson, William Richardson and John Richardson.

Julian married and had four children: Gertrude, Edwin, John and May.

Rose married and had one son, Edwin.

Polly Carter, wife of Hector Taylor, had three children: Ann Taylor Foster, Virgil Corydon Taylor and Katherine Taylor Romer. The names of her grand-children and great-grand-children appear in the records of the Taylor and Romer families.

One hundred and sixty Carters had graduated from Oxford before 1886; several had received the honor of knighthood, and the family arms belonged to almost all of the names in southern, and especially southwestern England. Their description is two lions combattant, sable; crest, a talbot passant on a mural crown; motto, *sub libertate quientem*.

William Wallace Lee in his address at the Centennial Celebration of Barkhamsted, where many of the early Taylors and Carters lived, said:

"William Taylor reared a large family, of which Emma (Mrs. Evits Carter) is the sole survivor. Some years later came Noah Carter, and settled in the Southwest District.

Between this family and the family of William Taylor a curious relationship exists. William Taylor had sons—William, Virgil, Hector and a daughter Emma; Noah Carter had sons—Evits, Andrews, Hiram, Joseph and a daughter Polly. Evits Carter married Emma Taylor; Hiram married a daughter of William Taylor, Jr.; Joseph married a daughter of Virgil Taylor; Hector Taylor married Polly Carter. Now I doubt if there is a Barkhamsted boy or girl well enough educated to tell the exact degree of kin between the posterity, for all of these families reared children."







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